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Emerging Non-religious Worldview Prototypes

A Faith Q-sort-study on Finnish Group-affiliates

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ABSTRACT

This thesis contributes to the growing body of research on non-religion by examining shared and differentiating patterns in the worldviews of Finnish non-religious group-affiliates. The organisations represented in this study consist of the Union of Freethinkers, Finland's Humanist Association, Finnish Sceptical Society, Prometheus Camps Support Federation and Capitol Area Atheists. 77 non-randomly selected individuals participated in the study, where their worldviews were analysed with Faith Q-sort, a Q-methodological application designed to assess subjectivity in the worldview domain. FQS was augmented with interviews to gain additional information about the emerging worldview prototypes.

Three distinct worldview prototypes, or interpersonally shared preferences, could be discerned. These prototypes differ from each other along three dimensions: attitudes towards religion and spirituality, social and societal orientation, and emotional-experiential life. The Content Altruists have societal concerns, reject religion and spirituality moderately, and are emotionally stable and content. The Experientially Spiritual are more individualistic, reject traditional religion but are open to spirituality, and appreciate deep and nourishing experiences. The Communally Irreligious favour like-minded association, reject firmly and consistently both religion and spirituality, and are emotionally content, despite some signs of awareness for negative experiences.

The results point to the multidimensionality of non-religion. Since FQS is able to assess both a variety of different worldviews, and to discern variation internal to a specific worldview constellation, it is concluded to represent a methodological advancement in religious studies in general, and in non-religious studies in particular.

Keywords: worldview, FQS, Faith Q-sort, Q-method, non-religion, irreligion, atheism, secularity, secular, freethinkers, humanists, Protu, Skepsis, Finland

ABSTRAKT

Denna avhandling bidrar till forskning kring icke-religion genom att undersöka gemensamma och differentierande särdrag i världsbilder bland individer anknutna till icke-religiösa organisationer i Finland. Organisationer representerade i denna studie består av Fritänkarnas förbund, Finlands humanistförbund, Skepsis, Prometheus-lägrets stöd och Huvudstadsregionens ateister. 77 icke-slumpmässigt utvalda personer deltog i studien, där deras världsbilder analyserades med Faith Q-sort (FQS), en Q-metodologiskt forskningsinstrument som är avsedd för att uppskatta subjektivitet inom världsbilder. FQS kompletterades med intervjuer för att få ytterligare information om de framträdande världsbild prototyperna, eller preferenser delade mellan respondenterna .

Tre olika världsbild prototyper kunde urskiljas. Dessa prototyper skiljer sig från varandra utefter tre dimensioner: attityder gentemot religion och andlighet, social och samhällelig orientering samt emotioner och upplevelser. De Belåtna Altruisterna har samhälleliga bekymmer, avvisar religion och andlighet måttligt, och är känslomässigt stabila och belåtna. De Upplevelsemässigt Andliga är mer individualistiska, förkastar traditionell religion medan de är öppna för andlighet, och de uppskattar djupa och närande erfarenheter. De Kollektivt Icke-religiösa föredrar likasinnad sällskap, avvisar bestämt och konsekvent både religion och andlighet, och är känslomässigt belåtna, trots vissa tecken på att vara medvetna om negativa erfarenheter.

Resultaten pekar på att icke-religion är ett mångdimensionellt fenomen. Eftersom FQS kan både uppskatta olika världsbilder, och urskilja variation internt till en viss världsbild konstellation, dras slutsatsen att metoden representerar ett framsteg inom religionsvetenskap i allmänhet, och i icke-religiösa studier i synnerhet.

Nyckelord: världsbild, FQS, Faith Q-sort, Q-metod, icke-religion, ateism, sekulär, sekularitet, fritänkare, humanister, Protu, Skepsis, Finland

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank all those individuals and institutions that have contributed and helped me in this project. The project has been financed by the Academy of Finland. In the final stages I have received a scholarship from Åbo Akademi. Without the support of these institutions the work would not have been possible.

It started in early 2011 with a discussion with Salome Tuomaala, who holds a PhD in religious studies. We share an enthusiasm in yoga, and on our way home from a workshop I mentioned my interest in worldviews. Some weeks later an email from Salome appeared in my inbox. Åbo Akademi was going to launch a research project focusing on worldviews and values, and persons interested in the project as doctoral students could apply. By Salome's encouragement, I applied and was invited to an interview. I am grateful for that initial encouragement and introduction to the project, as well as her friendship. It means a lot to me.

The interview was conducted in three languages, Swedish, English and Finnish, by Professor Peter Nynäs and Post Doctoral researcher Mika Lassander. Since I was the last applicant to be interviewed, I received a response the same evening: Would I be willing to do it? Yes, I was, with the full support of my wife Henriikka, whose ongoing support ever since has made it possible, particularly when I at times was losing my own faith.

Peter and Mika have acted as my mentors, supervisors and well-wishers, and their support since the first interview has exceeded my expectations in every way. They personify the rare combination of being both expert in their field and very human and supportive. It has been a pleasure to work with them all these years.

Early on, I travelled with Mika to US to meet in person Professor David Wulff. David has designed a most exciting research instrument for assessing worldviews. After I personally experimented with the instrument, I became hooked: this was really interesting! The instrument, Faith Q-sort, became an essential part of the present study. I have been impressed by David's willingness to patiently, time after time, answer any question regarding the instrument, and more broadly anything connected to the research project. I have likewise been impressed by the amount of books that I saw in his house, and last but not least, David's vegetarian cooking is something I will never forget.

After initial preparations, it was finally time to start the interviews. As I live in Sweden, it required quite some planning to get everything done. I have been surprised by the overwhelming interest towards the project, flexibility in negotiating the interviews, the feedback, and general kindness of the non-religious participants of this study. They have generously given their time and energy, and been willing to help whenever needed. With some sadness I had to decline some respondents' participation, due to time and economic constraints. I am sorry for that. It would have been nice to

double the amount of participants, particularly as it was such an inspiring experience to conduct the interviews.

My thanks go to Docent Tuomas Martikainen, who helped me with finding a location in Helsinki for a whole week. I have also been invited to the respondents' homes, and some interviews were conducted in Cafés and in libraries. Throughout, the helpful attitude of the respondents has made it possible even when external circumstances were less than ideal. I should also not forget to mention, with appreciation, Mika Lassander's design of the sorting board for the Faith Q-sort: it has a magnetic board which can save everything from being destroyed during Earth quakes, and the Numbers-application recognises mistakes in entering the results, a saving grace more than once.

After the data was collected, it was time to analyse it. I am grateful to Peter Schmolk, who gives free access to PQMethod, the software he has designed for Q-analyses. It is easy enough to use even for someone like me who is not an expert in the field.

Throughout the study, I have received a lot of help from different specialists in the field of non-religious studies. Phil Zuckerman, Frank Pasquale, Christopher Cotter, Lois Lee, Tatjana Schnell, Ann af Burén and Ryan Cragun have contributed with insightful comments and encouragements. Thank you all! You have helped to place this study in the broader context of the non-religious studies. There is an expert in the field in Finland, Teemu Taira, whose comments have always been helpful and to the point. Teemu has written one of the best books that I have read on the new visibility of atheism. This and his other publications have been a source of inspiration for me. Teemu examined my manuscript and gave valuable feedback.

Paul Stenner examined my manuscript and gave excellent and inspiring feedback from the Q-methodology point of view. Paul is also one of the co-authors for the most inspiring book I have come across about the fascinating world of Q-method. I am both grateful and inspired for the comments I have received, as well as for just about anything I have read in the book.

Early on, I received a supportive push to studying non-religion, as a round-table seminar on the new visibility of atheism was arranged in Turku in 2012. I thank all the other organisers for allowing me to participate.

In Åbo Akademi, both in connection with the research and in other academic occasions, the support of everyone in the department that I have come in contact with has been a confirmation that it was a right move to work in the academic world. Dr Måns Broo and Dr Jan Svanberg have given me helpful feedback as well as friendly support. All the people I have met have been kind and supportive.

Everyone else, please forgive me for not giving you the credit you deserve.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the effects of the 9/11 terror attacks was the increased visibility of views critical towards religion. Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens have cited these attacks as key stimulus that inspired them to directly challenge religion.[1] The challenge presented by these and other best-selling authors has been labeled New Atheism. Even though the "newness" of the New Atheism might be challenged - the basic atheistic arguments presented by these authors are not radically different from "old" atheistic ones - the reception and sales figures of the literature is certainly something unprecedented. Richard Dawkins's *The God Delusion* (2006) alone has sold millions of copies, other notable bestsellers being *The End of Faith* by Sam Harris (2004), *God is Not Great* by Christopher Hitchens (2007) and *Breaking the Spell* by Daniel Dennett (2006). Atheism sells in quantities not previously seen.

The increased visibility of atheistic and anti-religious viewpoints has no doubt played its part in increasing academic interest in atheism and non-religion. Other contributing factors are the decreasing memberships of the religious denominations - in those countries where that has taken place, such as Finland - and the weakened interest in the secularisation paradigm.[2] The academic interest in non-religion takes various forms. One particular expression consists of apologetical works, mostly if not solely written by theologians. Some titles of these books directly reflect the impact of the work that they are responding to: *The Dawkins Delusion* (McGrath & McGrath 2007); *Dawkins letters: Challenging Atheist Myths* (Robertson 2007), *Atheist Delusions* (Hart 2009); and *The Devil's Delusion* (Berlinski[3] 2008). A common denominator of these works is to engage with and argue against what are seen as flaws in the anti-religious arguments.

Another academic response is to study the non-religious individuals from the social sciences' point of view. There is comparatively little social scientific data about the non-religious individuals. Compared to the social scientific study of different religious denominations and individuals, the contrast is striking. Colin Campbell's call for a social scientific study of irreligion[4] remained for a long time without a significant response.[5] Hence, Hunsberger and Altemeyer claimed that theirs was the first systematic scientific study of affiliated atheists,[6] a claim that reflects the minimal attention given to non-religion. The situation, however, is rapidly changing. Social scientists have begun asking questions about the non-religious individuals' beliefs, commitments and interests.[7] One indica-

[1] McAnulla 2012: 91

[2] Taira 2016

[3] Unlike the others, Berlinski is a mathematician, not a theologian.

[4] Campbell 1971: vii; 8-16

[5] Zuckerman 2010c: vii

[6] Hunsberger and Altemeyer 2006: 19

[7] Taira 2016

tor of the growing academic interest can be found by looking at the list of relevant publications maintained by the Non-religion and Secularity Research Network (NSRN), where the number of academic studies on non-religion and related issues in the six-year period 2008-2013 exceeds that of the period before 2008, the whole 20th century included.

It is certainly reasonable that Colin Campbell's call is finally being heard. According to a recent poll, 33% of the world population self-identify as either atheist or non-religious.[8] Interpreting the figure is admittedly problematic,[9] since according to another poll (2012), most of those self-identifying as non-religious at the same time follow at least nominally a major religious tradition. Thus, we have non-religious Christians, Hindus, Muslims and Jews.[10] At the same time, since atheism analytically only rules out theistic religions, at least some of the self-identified atheists might in principle be following a non-theistic religion, such as Raëlism, some interpretations of Buddhism etc. Whichever way we interpret the statistics, it seems clear that non-religion is far from a marginal position. On the contrary: according to the gallups I am alluding to, if the self-identified non-religious *and* atheists were combined into one group, they would be the largest faith-orientation in the world. Even without atheists, the non-religious would occupy the second or third place in the global faith-map, the only religious tradition with significantly more adherents being Christianity.

To take the non-religious, or the combined group of the non-religious and the atheists as one homogeneous worldview would of course be misleading, just as putting the followers of the various religions into one category and calling them all plain religious would be. Already in 1971, Colin Campbell proposed that the irreligious experiences are probably just as variegated and widespread as their religious counterparts.[11] Although Campbell's remark was written more than four decades ago, there is so far not much knowledge about who these people are, who do not consider themselves as religious. If religion does not provide them sustenance, values, meaning of life, role-models to emulate, then what does? Are the non-religious individuals similar or different? How do the non-religious individuals view the world?

It is these kinds of general questions that lie in the background of the present study, which is part of a larger research project, 'Viewpoints to the World' at the Department of Comparative Religion at Åbo Akademi University and financed by the Academy of Finland. Despite prominent work that has been done in studying non-religion, there are so far few generally agreed-upon theories, not to speak of works holding a status á la William James' Gifford lectures at the University of Edinburgh in 1901 and 1902, (edited and published as *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*). This is not to say that the studies done so far would be invalid or irrelevant - on the contrary. Since the field is still new, our understanding of the non-religious is on the increase. I

[8] Win Gallup International 2015

[9] See Zuckerman, Galen and Pasquale 2016: 231-232 for a critical discussion regarding the Chinese sample.

[10] Win Gallup International 2012

[11] Campbell 1971: 127

want to contribute to this growing body of knowledge by exploring the situation in Finland. If in the global scale the studies on atheists and the non-religious are sparse compared to studies on religion, in Finland the contrast is even more marked. Therefore, my point of departure is to answer the basic questions of the kind listed above. My aim is to let the non-religious individuals speak for themselves - and from there, to try to draw more general conclusions.

1.1 The Scope of This Study

The table of contents to The Cambridge Companion to Atheism gives some idea about the various perspectives we can take to the academic study on atheism. Atheism is not synonymous with non-religion, yet there is enough overlap to suggest that the various perspectives would be relevant for the study of non-religion as well. We can take an interest in the history of non-religion, where the investigation can be either ideological or sociological. Likewise, we can investigate the demographic data about the non-religious individuals today: income, voting preferences, gender ratios, cohorts, demographics in various countries and so on. Non-religion is related to various philosophical and ideological viewpoints such as Marxism, Secular Humanism and Naturalism, even though non-religion does not automatically imply these viewpoints. The relationships of such ideologies to non-religion could be investigated philosophically. We can take an interest in what a non-religious ethical theory would look like. Furthermore, the various non- or anti-religious arguments can occupy the scholar's horizon - sometimes to the extent of writing lengthy apologetical works as a reaction to these. Non-religion can also be studied by focusing on particular rather than general criticisms raised against one, many or all religions, such as feminist criticisms raised against patriarchal religions, where particularly the Abrahamic monotheisms have been targeted by both feminist philosophers and theologians.[12] The discrimination against the non-religious individuals can be the focus of the research. How a particular national law is consistent with the ideal of equality of men regardless of their religion or its absence can be investigated.[13] Furthermore, the peculiarities of the different non-religious national histories and cultures can be a topic of research:[14] Is the American non-religion different from the Scandinavian one, for example ?[15] What about the non-religious psychological profiles? Are the non-religious individuals liberal or conservative; tolerant or intolerant; neurotic, depressed or flexible; psychologically healthy or less so; moral or immoral; less or more intelligent than others?[16]

More than these perspectives can be applied. I am interested in the last two: the national situation in Finland, and the psychological profiles of the non-religious individuals. Particularly, I am interested

[12] Overall 2007: 233-246

[13] Gey 2007: 250-265

[14] Taira 2015

[15] Zuckerman 2012a

[16] Beit-Hallahmi 2007. Beit-Hallahmi writes about atheists, a sub-category of non-religious.

in applying these perspectives to those non-religious individuals who are likely to hold the most pronounced opinions about religion. These are the individuals who are affiliated with organisations with a non-religious profile.

Since this study focuses on Finnish affiliated non-religious individuals, the results will necessarily reflect the situation in Finland, which may differ from that of other countries.[17] This does not mean the results do not have more general relevance, but I am not going to engage in comparing Finnish non-religion with other countries. Limiting the scope of the investigation to non-religion in Finland, I will further refine the focus by inquiring about a very particular aspect of the psychological profile: the non-religious worldview. By using a new research instrument, the Faith Q-Sort (shorthand: FQS), designed to assess both religious and non-religious worldviews, combined with participant interviews, I want to assess basic psychological worldview prototypes amongst Finnish non-religious individuals. The two questions I am seeking to answer are:

1) What are the common elements of the non-religious group-affiliates' worldviews? This part is like placing the Finnish non-religious affiliates' worldviews on the global worldview map, and looking at them from a distance. It answers the question: Is there a common ground that is shared by the respondents as a group? If there is, how does it look like?

2) What are the major differences *within* the non-religious discourse of the Finnish non-religious group-affiliates? Colin Campbell's remark suggests that not all non-religious respondents of this study will share one homogeneous worldview. In that case, what are the major differences? What kind of worldview variance can be found amongst the non-religious individuals?

The basic research question can be summarised in the following way:

> *What are the major shared and differentiating elements in the worldviews of individuals engaged in the Finnish non-religious organisations?*

As has been mentioned, the non-religious studies is a growing field of academic inquiry. It is useful to take a look at some important studies done in Finland and elsewhere that provide the background for the present study.

1.2 Previous Research on Non-Religion

How can non-religion from a social scientific point of view be approached, when there are few generally agreed-upon theories? As one possible approach of arriving at a set of theories about non-religion, Colin Campbell considers reversing some classic hypotheses in the sociology of religion:

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[17] Taira for example, has argued that even though according to the statistics, many people do not believe in God, 'atheist' as an identity-tag is relatively unpopular due to its historical association with non-Finnishness. See Taira 2012b: 32

If religion is linked to societal integration, is non-religion then linked to disintegration or isolation? If religion strengthens social control, will non-religion have a weakening effect? If religion contributes to morality and to a sense of identity, will non-religion have the opposite effect? One of the problems with this sort of approach is that in principle it is quite possible that the same social forces can evoke both religious and non-religious responses.[18] However, does this mean it cannot be done? To play with the idea a little: what would an obverse understanding of religious worldviews lead us to presume about the non-religious ones?

It would seem a task hopelessly broad to try to arrive at a single negation of the thousands of religions existing today. Atheism, for instance, strictly speaking only negates theistic claims, and the religious worldview-options on the theistic dimension range from atheism[19] to a variety of theisms: monism, deism, monotheism, bitheism, ditheism, tritheism, polytheism, pantheism, panentheism and so on. It follows that it is impossible to arrive at a single non-religious worldview disposition on the theistic dimension: all options are or have been occupied by one or more religions. Atheism is therefore not equal to non-religion, unless it is specified that the differentiation from religion does not mean differentiation from Jain metaphysics. Likewise, other kinds of beliefs could be scrutinised, with similar consequences.[20]

How about focusing on the this-worldly experience instead of the other-worldly? Then we need to leave out religions such as the Hua of New Guinea.[21] What about epistemology based on revealed scriptures? The various folk-religions without a textual corpus present a problem, and so does Wicca.[22] Even within the revelation-based religion par excellence, Hinduism, there is something to be said about the spirit of experimentation prevalent in certain teachings of yoga and meditation,[23] which makes one wonder, at which point insightful discussion taking the form of authoritarian teaching turns into religious revelation. These examples seem to indicate that to arrive at a hypothesis about expected ingredients of a non-religious worldview would need some cultural qualifiers. We would have to limit the investigation to a particular set of religious expressions, from which the non-religious respondents at hand are expected to differentiate themselves.

In Finland, the obvious reference point is the dominant form of religion, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. A slightly broader reference point would include even the other national church,

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[18] Campbell 1971: 13-16. A corollary from the cognitive scientific study of religion, Geertz and Marcusson (2009) claim that religion and atheism are *both* natural human cognitive strategies.

[19] I mean here atheistic religions. Raëlism is a religion without gods. Jainism, certain interpretations of Buddhism and variants of Sankhya and Mimamsa schools of Hinduism imply some sort of atheism in the sense that the gods of these systems are subject to the same laws of nature as human beings, and hence are ordinary mortals.

[20] E.g. beliefs in soul and afterlife: rejected by some forms of Buddhism; beliefs in heaven and hell: rejected by Advaita-Vedanta in Hinduism as illusory.

[21] Eller 2007: 235 and 2010: 11

[22] Taira 2010: 388

[23] See Bryant 2009: 9-10, 32-38 and 159-162

the Orthodox Church of Finland, which despite its much smaller number of followers nevertheless shares the same legal privileges. Applying a reversed theory in Finland would entail going through the relevant studies about Lutheran and Orthodox Christianities in Finland. Even here, the situation is complex. According to statistics, Finns are not different from people in other countries, in that being a member of the church does not automatically lead to active participation in its services, or believing in most of its doctrines. It would, therefore, seem reasonable to be at least cautious about the "reversed religious studies" approach for formulating hypotheses.

I believe it is more meaningful to ask, along with Tatjana Schnell, William Keenan and Frank Pasquale, whether non-religiousness indicates a specific set of loadings along the structural departments of a commonly held, non-religious worldview, or whether it is more reasonable to expect a diversity of subordinate meaning-systems within religious disaffiliation.[24] Let us see what we can find out from previous research.

Bruce E. Hunsberger and Bob Altemeyer claimed to be the first to scientifically study active atheists. Studying affiliated atheists' tendency to be dogmatic, willingness to proselytise, and exhibition of worldview ethnocentrism, they found out that their respondents resembled religious fundamentalists in dogmatism, exhibited a strong "Us versus Them" ethnocentrism, whereas their willing to proselytise others ranged from moderate to low.[25] Before them Colin Campbell maintained that non-religious experiences are not uniform but, instead, most likely display as much variation as religious experiences do.[26] Campbell focused on various kinds of irreligion (the term of Campbell's choice), using a sociological perspective. He considers a pure type of irreligion, where all religions and all their components are rejected, to be a rare specimen.[27] Furthermore, irreligion is expressed in a range of ways along a social continuum, where individual and private represent one end of the spectrum and the well organised associations the other.[28] After Campbell, Paul Pruyser has also suggested that the phenomenon of non-belief is just as multi-faceted as religious belief.[29]

Some work had been done even before these pioneers. Henricus Cornelius Rümke explored stages of belief and the corresponding stages of unbelief, where belief is taken as the default condition, and unbelief associated with hindrances in natural development. Rümke links unbelief with disturbance in growth, one-sided development of the intellect, a rigidity in the integrating process, a di-

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[24] Pasquale 2007a: 762; Schnell & Keenan 2011: 56

[25] Hunsberger and Altemeyer 2006; Altemeyer 2010: 8-9. The active atheists may differ from non-affiliated atheists by being more worldview ethnocentric (the term used by Hunsberger and Altemeyer is religious ethnocentrism, which I consider misleading when applied to those who differentiate themselves from religion). See Altemeyer 2010: 12

[26] Campbell 1971: 127

[27] Campbell 1971: 32-33

[28] Campbell 1971: 39-45

[29] Pruyser 1974: 195

version of emotional-intuitive life for fear of passion and symbolic blindness.[30] Furthermore, he claims that surrendering to God is hindered by different fears, and that most obstacles to surrender originate in unresolved Oedipus complications.[31] An early attempt to arrive at a typology of atheism based on psychoanalytic observations is that of Ignace Lepp.[32] Combining material from hundreds of people Lepp had encountered as a psychoanalyst, he categorised different ways in which people develop and hold an atheistic worldview. Even though Lepp's work lacks systematic methodological rigour, he has interesting insights into how similar psychological predispositions may underlie both religious views and their opposites. A later study with a similar approach is that of Paul Vitz (1999), who proposes that one's image and understanding of God is negatively affected by a diminishing authority of one's father. Hence, an absent, weak or abusive father is likely to contribute to an atheistic mentality.[33] Unlike Lepp, Vitz does not verify his theory with living persons, but focuses on the biographies of historically well-known atheists.[34]

Approaching the publishing date of Hunsberger and Altemeyer, the Centre for the Psychology of Religion at the Catholic University in Leuven in 1991 organised a symposium focusing on the psychological study of belief and unbelief. In his epilogue to the book consisting of papers presented in the symposium, Antoon Vergote noted the scarcity of psychological research on atheism as a form of religious unbelief.[35] A participant in the symposium, Geoffrey Scobie suggested that unbelief is often referenced to belief probably due to the historical hegemony of religious belief, the more cohesive cognitive structures of religious belief systems, and a common referencing system imposed by a need to communicate with a shared code of language. Furthermore, unbelief may have arisen by rejecting previously held beliefs.[36] In his sample of undergraduate psychology students, Scobie found that trajectories of rejection differed depending on the object of rejection. Rejecting a previously held political preference was more often of a particular kind - giving up a particular political preference rather than interest in politics in general - whereas rejection of previously held religious beliefs more often appeared to be a sign of rejecting religion in general. Scobie concludes tentatively that amongst his respondents, there seems to be an increased tendency to see religion as a single unitary system, whereas politics are more often seen in terms of party preferences.[37]

Most of the symposium contributions dealt with developmental aspects of "unbelief"—usually within a religious frame of reference. Oser, Reich, and Bucher presented exploratory studies on the

[30] Rümke 1952: 6-10

[31] Rümke 1952: 45-49. See Belzen 1994 for a critical evaluation of Rümke.

[32] Lepp 1962 (original work: 1961)

[33] Vitz 2013: 5-9.

[34] Vitz 2013. Vitz's theory is developed on the basis of Freud's remarks. He also attempts to present indirect support for his case with biographies of well-known theists.

[35] Vergote 1994: 233

[36] Scobie 1994: 87

[37] Scobie 1994: 91-95.

developmental levels of atheism, paths to atheism, and functional equivalents of theists and atheists faced with contingency situations. They concluded that refinements of item formulations would be needed in further studies that focus on nonbelievers.[38]

After Hunsberger and Altemeyer's efforts, several attempts have been made to investigate different aspects of the non-religious dispositions. In her study about how being without religion affects family and the upbringing of children, Christel Manning found that secular families varied considerably regarding both their worldviews and (non)affiliation with a community. She discerned four types of worldviews: 1) Pure Secularism refers to those respondents whose worldview could be characterised by materialism, nontheism, questioning, and appreciation for the scientific method; 2) Naturalism is Manning's term for respondents with an earth-centred worldview incorporating feelings of the sacredness of nature, beliefs in an impersonal connecting force, and openness to Buddhist or Pagan ideas; 3) Pluralism stands for the religiously unaffiliated, whose disaffiliation is due to not committing to or preferring only one tradition, seeing religions as different paths to the same goal; and 4) Religious Indifference is a term for respondents who despite lacking religious beliefs are not keen on rejecting religion - it just does not matter that much.[39] Christopher Cotter has conducted a study amongst students at the University of Edinburgh and has identified five types of non-religious individuals: 1) naturalists, 2) humanists, 3) family-focused, 4) spiritually inclined and 5) rationalists.[40] Frank L. Pasquale has studied variations in attitudes, values and conceptions of life amongst individuals active in different secular groups in the American Northwest,[41] whereas Tatjana Schnell and William J. F. Keenan have identified three types of atheists in Germany: 'atheists with a low degree of engagement',[42] 'atheists with a high degree of engagement'[43] as well as those whose engagement is characterised by self-actualisation.[44] In another study (2013), Schnell and Keenan explored atheist spirituality. They found out that this sort of spirituality is positively related to a per-

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[38] Oser, Reich and Bucher 1994: 39-59

[39] Manning 2010: 27-35

[40] Cotter 2011: 78-89.

[41] Pasquale 2007b and 2010

[42] "Aside from explicit religiosity and spirituality, they [low-commitment atheists] particularly avoid optimistic and life-affirming sources of meaning such as generativity, creativity, unison with nature, and attentiveness." (Schnell and Keenan 2011: 73)

[43] "Broad-commitment atheists...are identified with higher levels of commitment and meaningfulness. Compared to religionists and nones, they are characterised by a particular commitment to self-knowledge, freedom, individualism, comfort, challenge, and knowledge. Their orientation can be described as progressive; conservative and value-oriented sources of meaning... are eschewed." (Schnell and Keenan 2011: 73-74.)

[44] "Selfactualising atheists resemble broadly committed atheists in their engagement for knowledge, freedom, self-knowledge, individualism, and comfort. However, these self-centred commitments are not broadened or balanced by an interest in relatedness, as is the case for the broadly committed atheists. In addition to shunning conservative sources of meaning such as tradition, morality, and practicality, selfactualising atheists also show little interest in cultivating relationships (love, care, community, fun), in selftranscendence through unison with nature or generativity, or in a mindful approach to life (attentiveness, harmony). This type of atheist seems to be settled in its knowledge-based worldview, untouched by crises of meaning." (Schnell and Keenan 2011: 74.)

sonal way of connecting with the divine and engaging in practices like prayer, meditation or contemplation. Conversely, the relationship between atheist spirituality and belonging to an activist group was small, and volunteering for an activist group even smaller. Furthermore, against expectations, they found no correlations between higher levels of happiness, satisfaction with life or trusting other people and being both atheist and spiritual. Despite self-defining as atheists, spiritual atheists tend to believe in reincarnation and life after death, and even in the protective power of lucky charms.[45]

In Great Britain, David Voas and Abby Day surveyed societal and political attitudes amongst secular and religious individuals and found that the seculars are slightly more likely to lean toward the political left, whereas the religious would be slightly more likely to lean to the right. The difference between certain basic values was larger: while almost two-thirds of the religious respondents agreed that "it is important to follow traditions and customs," less than one-fourth of the secular respondents were in agreement with the statement. A smaller difference between the religious and secular profiles can be seen regarding hedonistic values, which were shared by 46% of the secular in contrast to 36% of the religious individuals.[46] In the United States, Barry Kosmin and Ariela Keysar have found that liberal attitudes concerning, for example, death penalty, homosexual marriage, societal wellbeing, religious education in public schools and stem cell research are correlated with increased secularity.[47] In political engagement, secular individuals are more likely to be politically unaffiliated (43%), which is then followed by Democratic (32%) and Republican (19%) preferences. These numbers can be contrasted with respondents who describe themselves as religious: 41% for Republicans compared with 28% for Democrats.[48] These observations led Kosmin and Keysar to state that instead of previous "'class politics'…"values" are the new battlefield and the religious divide is more central to politics."[49] Beyond politics and specific attitudes, Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi contends that the Western atheist's psychological profile is characterised by tolerance, liberal attitudes, and higher education.[50]

A recent contribution in studying secularity and non-religion is that of Phil Zuckerman, Luke W. Galen and Frank L. Pasquale (2016). Rather than applying only one methodological perspective or focusing on a particular non-religious phenomenon or group, the volume attempts to compile, "what

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[45] Schnell and Keenan 2013: 101-118

[46] Voas and Day 2007: 107-108.

[47] Kosmin and Keysar 2006: 276.

[48] Keysar and Kosmin 2007: 26. Cf. Zuckerman, Galen and Pasquale 2016: 177 for similar but stronger distinctions amongst American atheists.

[49] Keysar and Kosmin 2007: 25.

[50] Beit-Hallahmi 2007: 300-313. The educational profile presented by Beit-Hallahmi is problematic. I will discuss this later in a footnote, when I present the data on the participants' levels of education. In short, Beit-Hallahmi uses studies which focus on apostates rather than all atheists. Furthermore, some more recent studies contest Beit-Hallahmi's conclusion.

existing social scientific research reveals about nonreligious men and women in the world today."[51] The book presents an impressive collection of available studies both from USA and elsewhere, even though the emphasis is on non-religion and secularity in USA. Beginning with definitions and terminology, the book presents findings about the numbers of non-religious and secular people across the globe, their attitudes, values, political preferences, social and organizational behavior, psychological profiles, basic demographics, factors underlying their worldview acquisition, family life, well-being, sexual behavior and morality. Some of the virtues of the book are that it pays attention to the internal differentiation within non-religion, and that it discusses critically many of the previous findings, where a recurring problem has been that religious non-affiliates have been treated as a homogeneous group.[52] One of the overall messages of the authors is to inspire further studies that focus on differentiation within non-religion. This is one of the central aims of the present study.

What about non-religious experiences? By analysing web-reports of people who have deconverted from religion to non-religion or atheism, Steven Bullivant (2008) points out that some people actually report strong and positive emotional experiences that are connected to giving up the previously held religious faith - the kinds some respondents had been expecting to come about in their previous religious life.[53]

Despite shared international patterns, it is important to be aware of national particularities. Phil Zuckerman has compared non-religious persons in the United States and parts of Scandinavia (Sweden and Denmark) and has concluded that in the USA, the non-religious tend to be very clear about why they gave up religion, they have a negative view of religion, and they feel comfortable stating that they do not believe in God. It is not typical for non-religious individuals in Sweden and Denmark to view their abandonment of religion as a meaningful process. They have a neutral or even somewhat positive view of religion, and they are more likely to lean towards having a more agnostic view rather than a clear-cut, atheistic one.[54]

Finland follows the international research pattern, where compared to religious individuals, non-religious individuals have less frequently appeared as an interesting research object. Matti Helin has investigated atheism and anti-religious attitudes in the context of political parties.[55] The first Finnish study that explicitly focuses on non-religion in Finland is Markku Salo's MA thesis. Salo studied the worldviews of freethinkers in Turku. Based on 22 interviews he arrived at a fourfold typology. One type is characterised by manual labour, does not use complex concepts, and speaks little. This type refers to one's own or others' experience rather than acquired knowledge. A second

[51] Zuckerman, Galen and Pasquale 2016: 223

[52] Zuckerman, Galen and Pasquale 201.

[53] Bullivant 2008

[54] Zuckerman 2012a: 17-18. See also Zuckerman 2012b for American deconversion narratives from religion to non-religion, Zuckerman 2014 for reflections on the American way of living a secular life, and Zuckerman 2008 for being secular in Denmark and Sweden.

[55] Helin 1996

type is engaged in mental work, has participated in political activities, is knowledgable and answers questions extensively. A third type may believe in God or is unsure or dismisses the question as irrelevant, and is content with the societal situation. A fourth type is characterised by narrow-mindedness and sharp expressions. This type considers that the number of freethinkers in Finland exceeds the number of explicit members. There is also a feeling that freethinkers are being discriminated against. This type is active in organisations.[56] A later and related study is Joni Leivo's MA thesis, which investigates freethinkers' view of man. Like Salo, Leivo interviewed freethinkers in Turku. Instead of constructing a typology, Leivo considers the respondents as a group. He finds that rationality is a normative principle in their thinking, and biologism characterises their view of man.[57]

Juha Seppo is so far the only researcher who has studied the history of the Freethinkers. In his study, Seppo traces the roots and early development of the Union of Freethinkers of Finland. Focusing on the period 1936-1946, he gives a very good summary of the early history of the movement.[58]Teemu Taira has investigated atheism in Finnish public discourse. Using as his source material published letters to the editor in Helsingin Sanomat in the period from 1946 to 2011, Taira argues that an explicit atheist identity continues to be unpopular in Finland due to its association with anti-Finnishness. The attitudes towards atheism have, however, changed during the period: from an alien other, associated with foreign countries such as China and the Soviet Union, towards one of the available and to some extent acceptable options in Finland.[59]

[56] Salo 1982

[57] Leivo 2000

[58] Seppo 1992

[59] Taira 2012b and 2014

Other studies have focused on anti-religious or atheistic argumentation and their reception, either in Finland[60] or outside the Finnish context.[61] The most thorough work in this regard is Teemu Taira's book on the new visibility of atheism. The book is exceptional in that it looks at contemporary atheism both as an international and a Finnish phenomenon. Taira discusses the argumentation of both the internationally and nationally well-known representatives of contemporary atheism, and the responses to the atheist challenges. Different from the criticisms of religion and the theological responses to these criticisms, Taira provides a third perspective, that of religious studies. Furthermore, an overview of the public perceptions of atheism is given, accompanied by a profile of a Finnish atheist.[62] Taira summarises the profile of the Finnish atheist in ten points: A Finnish atheist is more likely to be 1) male; 2) young; 3) urban; 4) unmarried; 5) politically left or green; 6) lower middle class or working class; 7) supporting liberal values and 8) without religion. Two further points are about education and level of income, where the available data does not give sufficient back-up for a clear profile.[63] The book is so far only available in Finnish, even though a broader audience would benefit from its contents. After Taira, a comparable contribution has been made by Stephen LeDrew, who takes a critical look at the New Atheist movement. One common thread for both Taira and LeDrew is to point out the differences between New Atheism and other modern strands of atheism.[64]

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[60] Anu Mäkitiura's (2000) Master's thesis studies the Finnish Freethinkers' argumentation, and Sami Panttila's (2012) focuses on the Freethinkers' and Humanists' bus-campaign and its reception. Both the Freethinkers' argumentation and its reception are to some degree also addressed by Seppo, even though his main focus is on the historical development (see Seppo, 1992: 51-54, 80-82, 87). Jussi Turunen (2014) in his MA thesis has studied the reception of the New Atheist best-sellers in the Finnish media. He concludes the general impression to be that New Atheist argumentation lacks quality and common sense, and is too much focused on the situation outside of Europe. On the other hand, some of the criticism misses its target, failing to recognise that the New Atheist literature belongs to the genre of popular science, rather than representing the cutting edge of theology or religious studies. Jussi Heinonen (2015) has investigated the argumentation of a prominent voice in Finnish debate, Ilkka Pyysiäinen. Locating Pyysiäinen's critical tone somewhere in between Dennett (mild) and Hitchens (intense), Heinonen considers Pyysiäinen's range of arguments to be narrow, mainly presenting science and Christian beliefs as mutually contradictory.The usage of rhetoric devices is richer than the scope of the argumentation. Pyysiäinen assumes different roles according to the topic, ranging from the scholar of religion and moral philosopher to a reporter and entertainer.

[61] Antto Hinkkanen (2011) has studied the role of multiverse theory both in theistic and atheistic argumentation. He finds it odd that on one hand, atheists who present themselves as spokespersons for natural sciences are inclined to a theory that has so far no basis in empirical evidence, and on the other hand that theologians criticise a theory for being overly metaphysical. Pasi Haikonen (2012) focuses on the argumentation of Richard Dawkins. Haikonen finds problems with most of Dawkins's arguments about God's non-existence and atheism being morally superior to a religious stance. Haikonen's thesis considers some Finnish authors' responses to Dawkins's arguments. In this sense, his work is only partly focused outside of the Finnish context. Tuomas Nieminen (2014) compares the British philosopher A.C. Grayling's atheism with the atheism of Dawkins, Harris, Dennett and Hitchens, concluding that there is sufficient overlap between these authors to justify Grayling's position as the "fifth horseman" of the New Atheism.

[62] Taira 2014

[63] Taira 2014: 253-254. Class identity is approximate. Finnish atheists tend to identify below their actual level of income.

[64] LeDrew 2016

To summarise, we can state that academic, social-scientific research about non-religion has been initiated, but there is much that we do not know. What would we then expect to find out by investigating the worldviews of the Finnish non-religious affiliates? Considering the overview, we might tentatively expect to find a common ground in

1) values (low on traditions; high on tolerance)[65],

2) political leanings (left, green or unaffiliated)[66] and

3) attitudes (liberal).[67]

We would expect to find variation regarding

1) socialisation and importance of group support[68]

2) dominance of a particular non-religious perspective over others[69]

3) objects of commitment and sources of meaning in life[70]

These aside, interesting topics that might emerge are non-religious or atheist spirituality[71] and non-religious deconversion or peak experiences.[72]

The participants in the present study are individuals who in some ways are affiliated with one or more of the prominent non-religious organisations in Finland. There are many organisations which take a stance of differentiation from the dominant forms of religion in Finland. Since most non-religious individuals in Finland are not group-affiliates, focusing on affiliated individuals will probably not yield results that would be applicable for all non-religious individuals in Finland. That said, it is interesting to find out how persons who take a pronounced stance for their non-religion view the world. Even though this study investigates the worldviews of individuals, and the interpersonally

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[65] Voas and Day 2007: 108; Beit-Hallahmi 2007: 303-305

[66] Taira 2014: 253; Keysar and Kosmin 2007: 25

[67] Taira 2014: 254; Kosmin and Keysar 2006: 276; Keysar and Kosmin 2007: 25-26

[68] Campbell 1971: 39-45; Cotter 2011: 78-89

[69] Pasquale 2007b: anti-religious, affirmatively naturalistic, sceptical, metaphorical and metaphysically indifferent focuses of attention. Cotter 2011: naturalist, humanist, spiritual and rationalist types of non-religionists; Manning 2010: purely secular, naturalist, pluralist or religiously indifferent orientations. See also LeDrew (2016) about two markedly different atheistic dispositions.

[70] Schnell and Keenan 2011

[71] Recognised by Cotter 2011 and Pasquale 2007b, and directly addressed by Schnell and Keenan 2013 and Taira 2012a

[72] Bullivant 2008

shared elements of those worldviews, it is good to have some background information about the relevant organisations. I will next present a short overview of the relevant non-religious organisations in Finland.

1.3 Organised Non-religion in Finland

Organised non-religion in Finland differs from the situation in many other countries. There is, relatively speaking, a large number of associations, but none of them has particularly many members. The largest ones[73] have more than a thousand members, but the smaller organisations[74] have membership totals ranging from several dozen to a few hundred. If one compares these numbers with the situation in, for example, Norway, where the Humanist Association dominates with over 80, 000 members[75], it appears as though organised non-religion has not elicited much interest in Finland. Some organisations, however, have an impact exceeding what the membership statistics alone indicate. An example of this the Tampere branch of the Freethinkers in contributing to over 350,000 people leaving the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland via a web-site. Another example is Protu (the Prometheus Camp Association of Finland), which for the past twenty years has arranged alternatives to Christian confirmation camps. In 2016, the total number of planned camps exceeds seventy. [76] In order to obtain a better overview of the field of research, I will now summarily present the associations and how they themselves describe their goals.

The oldest of the organisations, *the Union of Freethinkers* (Vapaa-ajattelijain Liitto ry) began its operations in 1937[77] and was registered under its present name in 1945. Before that, many organisations were founded for persons who had declined their church membership. Most of these organisations were soon closed down, yet one of them, the local association of Kotka, was started in 1930 and is still active. The Union has many local associations, and the number of members is slightly below 2,000.[78] It is the publicly most visible Finnish non-religious organisation, particularly known for promoting the separation of state and church and for advancing atheism.[79] *Finland's Humanist Association* (Suomen Humanistiliitto)*,* which was originally founded in 1968, is also an organisa-

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[73] Protu, Vapaa-ajattelijat, Skepsis

[74] Pääkaupunkiseudun ateistit, Suomen ateistiyhdistys, Uskontojen uhrien tuki

[75] human.no/om-oss/om-organisasjonen

[76] https://www.protu.fi/prometheus-leirit/leirit-aika.

[77] The union was first registered with the name Suomen Siviilirekisteriyhdistysten Keskusliitto, then was disbanded, but was later started up again with its present name.

[78] vapaa-ajattelijat.fi/historia. Information concerning membership numbers obtained via a conversation with chairman Petri Karisma, 30.7.2013

[79] Taira 2014: 165

tion consisting of local associations.[80] The number of members in this case, however, is significantly less: at the end of 2009, there were less than three hundred registered members.[81] Humanists have a less frequent public presence in Finland, and their religious critical stance in public discussions tends towards the moderate rather than pronounced.[82] There are presently four organisations registered in Finland having in some way the word 'atheist' as part of their names. Of these, one is, despite its name (Länsi-Uudenmaan ateistit), a member of the Union of Freethinkers.[83] The other three are the Capital Area Atheists (Pääkaupunkiseudun ateistit), Finland's Union of Atheists (Suomen ateistiyhdistys) and Atheos ry.[84] Their public presence has been relatively small; topical issues have been the separation of state and church, and supporting the cause of atheists and non-religious individuals.[85] Out of these, the Capital Area Atheists is represented in this study. The membership figures in all atheist organisations are significantly lower than in Freethinkers or Humanists. In the Capital Area Atheists, there are presently less than 30 members.[86]

The above mentioned organisations share a number of common goals: to work for the separation of Church and State (Freethinkers, Humanists, Finland's Union of Atheists), guaranteeing equal rights for everyone regardless of one's worldview (Freethinkers and Humanists), supporting the position of non-religious individuals in society (Freethinkers, Capital Area Atheists), encouraging open discussion concerning issues related to lifeviews (Humanists), promoting the viewpoints of non-religious individuals (Humanists, Capital Area Atheists,), and encouraging humanistic or non-religious culture (Humanists, Finland's Union of Atheists, Freethinkers) as well as a scientific understanding of the world (Freethinkers, Capital Area Atheists, Finland's Union of Atheists).[87]

The last mentioned goal is also of central importance for the *Finnish Sceptical Society* (Skepsis), an organisation of sceptics that is dedicated to promoting critical, scientific and rational thinking. With its nearly 2,000 members, Skepsis is one of the major organisations in Finland.[88] Without taking a stance which is directly critical of religion in general, Skepsis works for the advancement of a criti-

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[80] www.brotherus.net:8080/confluence/display/hum/Liiton+historia+lyhyesti

[81] www.ateistit.fi/uutiset/uuti100523.html

[82] Taira 2014: 165

[83] www.dlc.fi/~etkirja/lohja.htm

[84] yhdistysrekisteri.prh.fi/ryhaku.htx?
kieli=1&hakuraja=0&nimi=*ateisti*&kotipaikka=&ensrek=&viimrek=&osoite=&evlu=&orto=&vapaa=&sb_haku=Hae#

[85] Taira 2014: 165

[86] Information received by email from the chairman and the secretary of the organisation 30 March 2016.

[87]vapaa-ajattelijat.fi/liiton-saannot/; www.ateistit.fi/saannot.html; www.dlc.fi/~etkirja/Ateistit.htm; www.brotherus.net:8080/confluence/display/hum/Suomen+Humanistiliiton+periaateohjelma; www.humanistiliitto.fi/?page_id=48

[88] Exact membership figure received from the secretary is 1908. Information received by email 30 March 2016

cal and scientific approach towards claims about reality.[89] If religions make false propositional statements, they become targets for Skepsis' criticism, a recurring theme since the founding of the association in 1987.[90] *Prometheus Camps Support Federation* (Prometheus-leirien tuki ry, or Protu) differs from the other organisations by its very specific focus on arranging camps for young people between 14 and 16 years. The camps are centred around different lifeview-related issues. Protu also arranges senior camps for young adults between the ages of 17 and 20. Even if the camps have their points of departure in humanistic notions of life, participants today come from both secular and religious backgrounds.[91] The camps are a success with any measurement, attracting far more participants than the membership figures of the organisation alone would indicate. Even so, with its more than 3,000 members Protu is the largest non-religious organisation in Finland by membership.[92] Inspired by the success of the camps in Finland, the initiative has been duplicated in Sweden, where a sister organisation (Protus) was founded in 2008.[93]

Based on the above, one can make a number of observations. Even if the organisations show variation in points of emphasis and approaches, they are united by their aim to contribute to a society and a culture that do not have their basis in religion. This is often combined with a critical stance towards certain religious assumptions and practices as well as religion's role in society. The issue involving the relationship between church and state occupies a central position.[94] This confirms Zuckerman's observation that the cultural environment influences the concrete shape of the national non-religion. Because of the central role one form of religion occupies in Finland, the criticism is largely directed towards the hegemony of the church rather than towards religion itself, even if this is not a rule. Skepsis, for instance, does not directly target the church-state problematic. Finally, it is important to note that the organisations devote themselves to public and mass-media operations in order to directly communicate their respective agendas to a larger audience. The non-religious organisations' role in Finnish society, therefore, seems to extend beyond what the membership statistics indicate.

I have chosen to call my respondents non-religious individuals and the organisations non-religious organisations. Other terms, such as secularist, atheist, or irreligious could have been considered. To motivate my choice, some discussion on the terminology is in place.

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[89] skepsis.fi/Yhdistys/YhdistyksenSaannot.aspx

[90] Taira 2014: 150, 165

[91] www.protu.fi/prometheus-leirit; www.protu.fi/yhdistys/leiritoiminnan-periaatteet

[92] www.protu.fi/yhdistys

[93] www.protus.se/about-1/#bio

[94] *Support Group for the Victims of Religion (Uskontojen uhrien tuki ry)* does not target religion in general nor the dominant forms of religion in Finland, but instead strives to give support and advice to those who feel that they have been wrongly treated by a religious community. Due to this focus, they differ considerably from the other organisations, and were not included in the present study for this reason.

2. TERMINOLOGY OF NON-RELIGION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the terminology of non-religion. Just as religion encompasses a variety of phenomena, the same goes for differentiation from religion. Even though most of the organisations with a non-religious profile emphasise the cognitive aspects, there are some which are primarily dedicated to other ways of differentiation, such as providing secular alternatives to major religious rituals. Differentiation from religion, then, is not only theory, but something that is practiced in life. What kind of term would best describe the respondents of this study as a group? I begin by discussing terms that can be used to describe the various kinds of differentiation from or opposition to religion. A long list of candidate terms includes secular humanism, scepticism, freethought, atheism, agnosticism, anticlericalism, rationalism, physicalism and naturalism, to name a few. They all capture some aspects about what it can mean to be opposed to, alienated from, disinterested in, or just without religion. For the purpose of this study, I will take a closer look at the terms that are directly related to the names of the major non-religious organisations in Finland: atheism, secular humanism, freethought and scepticism. After that, I will consider candidates for a term that could be used to refer to the respondents of this study as a group. I motivate my choice of the term *non-religion* and its derivatives *non-religious* and *the non-religious* (when talking about non-religious people), comparing it to "irreligious", "secular" and some other options.

2.1 Atheism

From the standpoint of its Greek roots, atheism simply means "without a belief in God." Yet the word *atheism* is sometimes defined as referring to the positive belief that no gods exist. Antony Flew has suggested the distinction between positive atheism (belief in the non-existence of God) and negative atheism (lack of belief in God).[95] This distinction can be further refined with qualifiers *narrow/broad,* or *local/global*.[96] In whichever way atheism is defined, it is clear that from an analytical point of view, it only targets a particular aspect of religion: that of theism. As such, atheism is an important aspect of a more general differentiation from religion, and has particular relevance

[95] Flew 1976: 14

[96] See Martin 2007: 2 and Philipse 2012: 343. A narrow or local negative atheist is a person who lacks belief in a personal theistic God, whereas a broad negative atheist lacks belief in any gods. A narrow or local positive atheist disbelieves in the theistic God, and a broad or positive negative atheist disbelieves in all gods. Such distinctions may at first sight seem mostly theoretical, with little practical validity. However, such distinctions can play a role in various ways in debates and discussions about identity. For instance, it is well known that the famous atheist buss-campaign used the formulations "there is probably no god", which effectively protects the atheist slogan from attacks against stating a universal negative claim (there is certainly no god). From the atheist side, the division may be seen as confusing the actual atheist position of rejecting the notion of God (see Eller 2010a: 6-7). These considerations aside, one might claim that most religionists are narrow or local atheists, negative or positive, since they lack a belief or disbelieve in the existence of god/s of other religions. Michael Martin presents a useful example that is relevant. According to Martin, one might be a positive atheist regarding anthropomorphic god/s such as Zeus, whereas the same person might be "only" a negative atheist regarding Paul Tillich's idea of God.

when the study is about differentiation from religion in Finland. Even though atheism might in principle be compatible with some non-theistic religious traditions, and it is possible for an individual atheist to be a member of a Christian church and participate in its ceremonies, in Finland being an atheist is probably indicative of a pronounced stance of differentiation. Atheism has traditionally been associated with anti-Finnishness, whereas church-membership has the opposite connotation.[97] This would explain why organised atheism is far from being the dominant form of organised non-religion in Finland: the atheist organisations in Finland attract dozens, whereas other non-religious organisations attract hundreds or thousands of followers. One such organisation is the Finnish Humanist-association, and I will next elaborate on secular humanism and its relation to non-religion.

2.2 Secular Humanism

Humanism is a stance broadly characterised by its focus on this-worldly human experience, well-being and knowledge. This-worldly is a broad articulation which leaves open the possibilities for various metaphysical stances - both religious and secular - as long as these remain subordinate to the primacy of the this-worldly human experience.[98] It has, therefore, become customary to make a distinction between religious and secular humanism. The concern here is with secular humanism, as that is the kind of humanism advanced by the Finnish Humanist-association. The International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) gives the following condensed definition of humanism:

> Humanism is a democratic and ethical life stance that affirms that human beings have the right and responsibility to give meaning and shape to their own lives. Humanism stands for the building of a more humane society through an ethics based on human and other natural values in a spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities. Humanism is not theistic, and it does not accept supernatural views of reality.[99]

Compared with non-religion, secular humanism is not satisfied by stating a difference from religion, but includes various positive characterisations about a desirable secular-humanistic way of life, goals to be achieved, sources of knowledge etc. Particularly the latter aspect of emphasising science as a primary epistemological principle is shared by other non-religious organisations as well. The most vocal proponent of reliable science versus unfounded beliefs is Skepsis - an organisation that organises its presentation and activities around this principle.

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[97] Taira 2012b

[98] Pasquale 2004: 3

[99] International Humanist and Ethical Union 2015

2.3 Scepticism

The Greek word skeptikos, "to consider, examine", gives a hint at the meaning of scepticism. Scepticism refers to a questioning attitude (or doubt) in relation to knowledge-claims or opinions. Depending on the scope of the sceptical inquiry and its nature, it can be variously named.[100] Scientific scepticism, a sub-domain of philosophical scepticism, seeks to promote the systematic application of critical investigation in scientific inquiry.[101] This is relevant for the present discussion being directly related to the kind of scepticism promoted by one of the non-religious organisations - Skepsis. Rather than doubting the possibility of knowledge in general, scientific scepticism[102] applies the sceptical inquiry into the knowledge claim at hand, which could be either of scientific or of a more general nature. Considering the proof, the scientific sceptic may accept pragmatic knowledge as being probably true based on available evidence. Even though the Finnish Sceptical Society does not explicitly target religious beliefs - even less organisations - its agenda can nevertheless be considered to overlap with the broader category of differentiation from religion, as it clearly differentiates itself epistemologically, both from religious revelation and from certain religious claims that contradict the present scientific understanding.

Sceptical inquiry is not the only disposition that challenges religious authority. Another historically significant strand of thought, *freethought*, in its traditional formulations challenges all authorities, including the religious ones.

[100] Kurtz 2007: 715-717

[101] Kurtz 2007: 715-717

[102] Other terms referring to the same are rational scepticism, sceptical inquiry and new scepticism.

2.4 Freethought

When freethought refers to a social movement, its ideological content emphasises the value of questioning "received ideas and traditional customs", involving rejection of superstition. Paul Foulkes summarised this rejection of traditional authority with a list of five no's: No party line, absolutes, censorship, sacred books nor sacred names.[103] Even though it is possible to define freethought in a way that allows for a religious stance, the Finnish Freethinkers Association, with its ca. 2,000 members and a consistent public visibility by various campaigns, makes sure that the primary understanding of the term in Finland bears a non-religious connotation. The Finnish Freethinkers Union's self-description proposes that removal of barriers be seen as a necessary negative starting point. Progress of ideas and love of truth should be based on rationality and openness to new, justifiable views and ability for a continuous renewal. Free use of reason as well as scientific thought is appreciated, whereas accepting anything without rational reasoning is rejected. An essential characteristic of freethought is to oppose intellectual stagnation and belief in authority, particularly of a religious kind.[104] Defined in this way, freethought represents an important non-religious perspective.

All the hitherto presented dispositions lay stress on a better alternative to religious beliefs. When they do so, they capture particular nuances of non-religion, each emphasising a differentiation from religion in a specific way: Atheism differs from theistic religious claims, secular humanism differs from the other- or next -worldly dimension of religion as well as from theocentric religious considerations, scepticism differs from religious epistemology and claims that contradict scientific principles and understanding, whereas freethought rejects religious authorities, both people and revelation.

2.5 Parent-category

The task at hand is to find a term that is broad enough to encompass the above perspectives, and that does not rule out a priori, a way of differentiation from religion that might emerge in the present study. From the analytic point of view, none of the above mentioned terms work as a name for a parent-category, as each one only represents one aspect of a larger field, where people choose to differentiate from religion in different ways. From the emic point of view, it would not do justice to the respondents' chosen self-identifications to label everyone as atheist, freethinker or humanist, when in fact some might consciously choose not to identify as such. If we opt out the terms found in the organisations' names, we need to consider other available terms. I will now discuss the following: this-wordly, Bright, secular, non-religious and irreligious.

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[103] Tribe 2007: 343-345

[104] vapaa-ajattelijat.fi/vapaa-ajattelu

2.6 This-worldly and Bright

Frank Pasquale and Andrew Singleton have used the term "this-worldly" to denote the positive aspect of worldviews and life-orientations that reject or doubt religion, or theistic, transcendental and supernatural beliefs.[105] I have considered the option of adopting this term to refer to the respondents of this study. In the present study, this-worldly undoubtedly captures important aspects of the participants' life-experience. It has the benefit of not defining a life without religion solely through negation, but has a positive connotation of affirming something - the life in this world. I see four problems with using this term. First, both religious and non-religious individuals can have a this-worldly focus, whereas the respondents of this study have been contacted because of their non-religiousness. From this point of view, this-worldly is not exclusive enough. Second, it would be problematic to motivate the usage of a concept that is neither being used in ordinary parlance, nor has been established as an academic term, if more established alternatives exist. Third, there are religious traditions, the adherents of which maintain that any gods or spirits within that tradition are inhabitants of this world. Various pantheisms could be called this-worldly; Buddhist and Jain cosmologies would likewise fall into the this-worldly category, since the inhabitants of the celestial realms participate in the same process of suffering as humans.[106] Fourth and most importantly, the term does not capture the particular social movement and its adherents that I am focusing on. The fact remains: the respondents of this study may identify as atheists or this-worlders, yet the primary act of differentiation in the context of this study is that of differentiation from the national norm of religion.

Following the example of using the term 'gay' for homosexuals, the term *bright* was purposefully coined to convey a positive image of the non-religious. As such, it has potentially more emic relevance than this-worldly. This is, however, hardly the case for the respondents of this study. There is no visible Brights movement nor registered affiliation in Finland with that name. The term is not established as an academic term either. The next candidate, however, seems to do better in that regard.

2.7 Secular

The English word *secular* is derived from the Latin *saecularis*, pertaining to a *saeculum* (generation, century),[107] hence meaning worldly, temporal or profane. These meanings are preserved in the present day meaning of the word secular. Even so, it is important to note that the word was already in use in early Christian context, where 'secular' referred to a religious specialist operating in the

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[105] Pasquale 2010: 43. See also Singleton 2007: 84, 92

[106] Buddhist and Jain soteriologes, on the other hand, have focuses that are better called non-this-worldly, as *nirvana* or *moksa* entail ending all connections with this world. To call them other-worldly would be going too far.

[107] Saeculum may originate from proto-Indo-European *seh$_1$- (reconstructed root) - to sow, or from *sey- - to bind, to connect. With a suffix (latin -*culum*), the meaning becomes to link generations together over time.

mundane realm as opposed to religious specialists operating outside of the mundane realm, such as monastic orders.[108] 'Secular' did not mean being non-religious, but being religious in a different way - differentiation *within* rather than *from* religion.

In the contemporary usage, Jose Casanova distinguishes three ways of being secular: 1) mere secularity (being religious is a normal viable option); 2) self-sufficient and exclusive secularity (living without religion is the taken for granted condition), and 3) secularist secularity (having been liberated from religion, as a condition for human flourishing).[109]According to Barry Kosmin, *secularity* is the appropriate name for the individual level, whereas *secularism* should be reserved for the application on a social level. He further distinguishes between the 'hard', the 'soft' and the in-between variants of both.[110] Another derivative word, *secularisation*, is often used in reference to a process where religion loses social and cultural significance, yet there is no one generally agreed upon secularisation theory; different theorists separate between global, local and individual levels where secularisation takes place. Not all processes or interpretations of secularisation mean the diminishing of religion's influence.[111]

One of the problems that have been pointed out about secular is that the dichotomy between the secular and religious reflects Western ethnocentrism.[112] It has also been pointed out that secularity varies from nation to nation, having its local nuances.[113] These observations do not rule out using the term in the Finnish context, as part of the investigation would provide information about whether a particularly Finnish way of being secular exists, and if so, in which way does it differ from other manifestations. The term has also merit as an academic category, and the term has been used to refer to non-religious individuals.[114] The question at hand is this: can a derivative word "secularist" capture the essence of the respondents of this study as a group?

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[108] Eller 2010a: 11; Casanova 2012: 28

[109] Casanova 2012: 28-33

[110] Kosmin 2007: 2-4

[111] See Glasner 1979: 15-64; Eller 2010a: 10-13; David Martin 2005. Zuckerman's (ed.) volume 2 of Atheism and Secularity deals with national expressions. To contrast the situation in Japan and Scandinavia, for instance: In the first case secularisation has taken place on the societal level, whereas on the individual level the situation is complicated, and persons who deny the existence of supernatural beings are rare (Roemer 2010: 23-40). In Scandinavia, on the other hand, there is a close alliance between state and the church, whereas the Scandinavian individuals are relatively secularised (Lüchau 2010: 177). See also Eller (2010b: 122) for Islamic context.

[112] De Roover, Claerhout and Balagangadhara (2011) argue that the meaning of an originally Western notion of secular has been distorted in the context of discussing an appropriate model for the emerging independent India as a secular state. Using the term has its problems not only in non-Western debates, but increasingly in the West as well, where multiculturalism decreases even the local usability of the distinction between religious and secular spheres.

[113] See Zuckerman 2010b for national examples

[114] Manning 2010: 28-29; Cimino and Smith 2014. Zuckerman uses terms like secular folks, religious nones, and irreligious individuals interchangeably in his foreword to a compilation of articles in Atheism and Secularity. See Zuckerman 2010c: vii-xi. In Zuckerman 2014, 'secular' is used throughout to characterise persons without religion.

It is with concerns about what is essential rather than secondary that I see problems in using this term. Secular, if used without qualifiers, does not necessarily distinguish itself *from* religion: Both some early usages of the term and some present day theorists allow the term to accommodate differentiation within rather than from religion. We also have to consider another problem with using 'secular', raised by Lois Lee: the study of the secular world can in principle encompass secular activities *without* any reference to religion, such as going to the bank.[115] This argument diminishes the value of *secular* for being used as the parent category in the present study. It is not that the respondents of this study do not care, or care only marginally about religion: They choose to differentiate from the religious establishment in Finland. Therefore, the scope of 'the secular' seems too broad for the purposes of this study *and* it either fails to or does not sufficiently capture the essential common denominator of the respondents: differentiation from religion. Next, I will therefore consider two terms that by default do just that.

2.8 Non-religion and Irreligion

The meaning of *non-religion* or *irreligion* is dependent on what *religion* means. There is notoriously little agreement in the academic discipline of religious studies about how religion should be defined. Due to this, the various terms that have *religion* as one of their components are somewhat problematic. Some scholars have argued that non-religion remains poorly defined if the *sine qua non* of religion is not established. For this reason, James Cox has recently proposed that the minimum components that something needs in order to be called religion are 1) identifiable communities, 2) a tradition, 3) an authority. From this definition it follows that non-religion is where communities, tradition and authority are absent.[116] Since it is possible to name communities with tradition an authority, that *either* reject religion, such as Marxist societies, *or* have no relationship to religion, such as the employees of Toyota, Cox's approach is problematic for the present purposes. Other approaches for finding the essence of religion have been made, and how the question has been resolved would have implications for the definition of non-religion. Jonathan Jong has argued that both substantive and functional definitions of religion, and by implication non-religion, are likely to fail.[117] In this study, however, I am not looking for all-encompassing and universally valid definitions of religion and non-religion. Instead, I let the respondents define how they understand religion, and the study is about how they differentiate from it. If in academic inquiries religion as a concept has fulfilled its heuristic function sufficiently well,[118] the same must go for differentiation

[115] Lee 2012b: 134

[116] Cox 2014

[117] Problems with Buddhism arise from the fact that Theravada Buddhism would do well without beliefs in supernatural agents, and hence have to be categorised not as a religion, if religion was defined as beliefs in supernatural entities. Problems with football, on the other hand, are related to attempts at defining religion based on some function it fulfils in society, or in an individual's life. Such definitions would open the door for including phenomena similar to football as an object of research in religious studies. See Jong 2015: 15-24 for a detailed discussion.

[118] Lee 2012a: 22

from religion. These considerations may allow us to adopt a term that may not have universal validity, but is based on the respondents' self-identification and the general cultural contexts of modernity, being Western and being Finnish.

The next question seeks to arrive at a prefix that will capture the essence of what it means to differentiate from religion. What is the particular mode of differentiation? The participants of this study are mainly either members of one or more of the non-religious organisations, or are connected to one or more of them by being on their mailing lists. Only one participant came by being given a hint by a friend who was affiliated, without personally being a member or on a mailing list. The significance of being affiliated, either by verifiable membership, or by more informal connection, should not be underestimated. More than 20% of Finns do not belong to a religious organisation. That is ca. one million people. The non-religious organisations combined have less than ten thousand members. Clearly, religious disaffiliation translates poorly into non-religious affiliation in Finland. In this, Finland follows a global pattern, where non-religious individuals do not form or join communities as much as the religious ones.[119] It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the respondents of this study are unusually committed to their differentiation from religion, evidenced by the two choices that indicate a clearly pronounced stance: 1) By being connected to at least one of the relevant organisations. This criterion shows that they belong to the most non-religiously active 1% amongst the religiously non-affiliated Finns. 2) By agreeing to participate in the study, knowing about the explicit formulation in the invitation to find "persons who in their lives emphasise non-religious humanism and customs, freethought or atheism, and who are in some way connected to a movement or organisation dedicated to such goals, such as the Union of Freethinkers, Finland's Humanist Association, or Finland's Union of Atheists." Agreeing to participate indicates that their affiliation with these organisations is not only formal, but they are prepared to spend time and energy to speak about their stance - filling in the web-survey and participating in the in-depth interview all together typically took anywhere from one to two and half hours.

Letting the choices of the respondents guide the choice of the term to be used to describe them, next, I plan to elaborate on it theoretically. Of the terms that have their point of departure in religion - *areligion, unreligion, antireligion, irreligion* and *non-religion* - the first three are problematic. Colin Campbell used areligion in reference to indifference toward or implicit rejection of religion.[120] Further nuances of areligion are absence of engagement with religion and total ignorance of religion.[121] All of these meanings are inapplicable, since the respondents of this study are neither ignorant of, indifferent to nor unengaged with religion. Furthermore, their rejection of religion is explicit rather than implicit, due to engagement in organisations with a pronounced stance of differentiation from religion. Unreligion has been defined variously. Whereas the Oxford English Dictionary for

[119] Eller 2007: 248; Zuckerman, Galen and Pasquale 2016: 211-222

[120] Campbell 1971: 24-25

[121] Lee 2012a: 23-24; Lee 2015: 29

American English defines unreligious as 1) indifferent to religion, 2) hostile to religion or 3) having no connection with religion,[122] David Voas and Rodney Ling have used the term in reference to a population who are not religious in the sense that their religious population are.[123] According to this definition, being unreligious is something other than being religious, and there is no necessary relationship to religion for the unreligious.[124] Understood in this way, the term does not work in the context of this study, where the respondents do have a relationship with religion, through differentiation. Likewise, the third Oxford meaning does not work, since the respondents have a connection with religion through their engagement and affiliation in the non-religious organisations. The first two dictionary meanings, however, are applicable in the present study. These understandings of unreligion overlap with irreligion. The latter would be a more suitable candidate, since it is more widely used. Anti-religion emphasises opposition to religion. The differentiation from religion can indeed be anti-religious in nature for some respondents, but that should not be the guiding presupposition of the study at the outset. The definition should not rule out ways of differentiating from religion other than blatant opposition. The remaining terms irreligion and non-religion, however, need to be considered as serious candidates, being broad enough to accommodate many different kinds of differentiation from religion.

I begin by introducing Lois Lee's definition, according to which non-religion can be defined as anything that is primarily defined by a relationship of difference to religion.[125] According to Lee, other spheres of life, which likewise have no connection with religion, but are not defined in relationship to religion - a Backgammon club for instance, which is primarily defined by playing Backgammon, or New Age and alternative spirituality which are primarily defined by their core practices rather than by differentiation from religion - are not included. Unlike in these examples, the participants of this study position themselves in relation to religion, by differentiation. The differentiation from religion may take a variety of forms, ranging from a broad and intense anti-religion where most or all religious phenomena are seen as problematic or harmful, to mild, even positive differentiation. Intense or mild opposition and positive differentiation are points on a continuum where the individual takes a stance of difference from religion. Anti-religion denotes an opposition to religion. It is one way of differentiation. Other forms of differentiation include alienation from religion and *conscious* indifference (a seeming oxymoron referring to someone who is making a conscious effort to avoid religious influences, promoting a way of life or ideology without religion, and/or a respectful dis-

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[122] www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/unreligious

[123] Voas and Ling 2010: 71. Voas and Ling simply state that they label those who believe, belong and participate as religious, whereas the term unreligious is reserved for those who neither believe, belong nor participate.

[124] Many of those who fall under this category may nonetheless engage with religion, for instance by opposing it. The particular problem of using the term in the sense that Voas and Ling do, is that it does not address the engagement with religion through differentiation, whether in oppositional or other terms.

[125] Lee 2012bb: 131 and Lee 2015: 21-48. In the latter publication, Lee explicates how we should understand the relationship between humanism and non-religion: Even though secular humanism can stand on its own without any reference to religion, many humanist organisations have non-religious components in their agenda, components which are only understandable in a world where religion exists.

agreement). Another kind of differentiation is peculiar: people who say they would like to believe in God but just can not.[126] Differentiation from religion in this case involves neither hostility nor rejection.

Lee argues that non-religion, rather than irreligion, should be used as a general term to refer to the general field of academic inquiry. Irreligion, if understood according to the OED-dictionary definition and as Colin Campbell originally used the term, has two main connotations that differ from one another. The first one, areligion, refers to a lack of interest in religion, absence of engagement with religion or total ignorance of religion. I have explained above why areligion is not applicable in the present study. The rejection of religion becomes more clearly pronounced in the second meaning of irreligion - anti-religion. Here religion is actively engaged with, antagonistically.[127] Lee gives two primary arguments for favouring non-religion over irreligion as the name for the emerging academic field (Study of non-religion). The first one is that irreligion, as it is defined above, is not able to accommodate a stance of positive differentiation from religion.[128] The second one is that semantically, irreligion rings more strongly of concepts such as infidel and heretic, referring to outsiders - people who opt out from the default position. Problems with this in contemporary Europe are clear: in many societies, being without religion is no longer a minority position, and in such contexts it would indeed be misleading to refer to a majority as an out-group, or heretics. Following Lee's argument, non-religion is semantically milder and does not have to involve opting out of the default position as one of its connotations.

Both non-religious and irreligious are appropriate translations for the Finnish word '*uskonnoton*', which refers to someone without religion. Which one works better in the Finnish context generally, and particularly for this study? Non-religion is more inclusive and able to capture a wider range of positions of differentiation. Irreligion, on the other hand, captures better the out-group aspect, and perhaps aspects of protesting against the national norm, which is relevant here. I will opt for non-religion for two reasons.

First, one of the relevant organisations, Skepsis, has an agenda that focuses on problematic truth claims. Some religious truth claims stand side by side with UFO-encounters and questionable health products. For Skepsis, the out-group and protest-movement aspect is less pronounced than irreligion would imply.

Second, at the outset, it seems reasonable to assume as little as possible about the worldviews of the respondents. This leaves room for respondents who may have views that are fairly positive towards religion. Some of the stances of differentiation from religion are not necessarily hostile towards religion: providing secular alternatives to the religious ceremonies does not have to be a hostile act, even though it is also not quite "I would like to but just cannot." Even though the positive differen-

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[126] Lee 2012b: 132; Campbell 1971: 25-26

[127] Lee 2012a: 23

[128] See above: The person says she would like to believe in God yet cannot

tiation in the sense of Lee's example is not part of the program of any of the organisations considered, at least theoretically it has to be considered an option for the individual respondents. That is what we do not know yet.

After arguing for the suitability of non-religion as the descriptive term for my respondents, I want to address the role of primacy in Lee's definition: non-religion as anything that is *primarily* defined by a relationship of difference to religion.[129] It seems that holding on to primacy as one of the criteria for something to be included in the field of non-religion may lead to problems. Humanism and scepticism need not have religion as their primary point of reference. Both could be imagined to do well in a religionless world. Protu could also be imagined to arrange their secular coming-of-age-camps in a religionless society. It may in some cases be difficult to decide whether something is primarily, secondarily or marginally defined in relation to religion. Consequently, it becomes difficult to decide whether a particular organisation belongs under the heading of non-religion or not, if the criterion of primacy is emphasised. Johannes Quack has exemplified what is at stake by comparing two Indian rationalist organisations, which share an overlapping agenda, even though only one of them explicitly defines their agenda in opposition to religion. Based on the similarity of their activities, Quack argues it would be overly rigid to include only one of them in the study of non-religion.[130] If the criterion of primacy is left out of the definition of non-religion, the working definition of non-religion for this study would be

> *anything that is defined by a relationship of difference to religion*

The different ways and degrees by which the organisations position themselves in relation to religion will then reflect the variety of different degrees and ways of being non-religious.[131] At the same time, pointing to the relatedness, this definition continues to fulfil its task to rule out such phenomena which have no relationship to religion at all, such as throwing darts. Moreover, defined in this way, we need not make universal claims about the true nature of religion or non-religion. It is sufficient that the respondents are differentiating from what religion means to them.

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[129] I thank Teemu Taira for pointing this out.

[130] Quack 2014: 447. Elsewhere, Quack points out that the "Radical Humanists", despite not defining themselves explicitly against religion, nevertheless oppose organised forms of religion and reject superstitious beliefs, seen to characterise the mainstream Hindu society. See Quack 2012: 85

[131] To engage with Lois Lee's (2015) discussion on non-religion a bit more: humanism and similar phenomena, while not non-religious per se (according to Lee's definition, with the emphasis on the primacy), may nevertheless inspire organisations and individuals to act and speak in their name, all the while incorporating non-religious elements in their agenda. I am not in any substantial disagreement with Lee when I choose to follow Quack and leave out the primacy-criterion and merely state that being related to religion, by differentiation, be a sufficient criterion. If Lee's definition be used, then I would have to explicate that rather than studying a particular organisation, I am studying a part of their program. This seems an unnecessary complication. In this study, the primary interest is in organisations that take a visible stance against or in relation to the national religious norm, and the organisations that are represented in this study fulfil this criterion.

I conclude the terminological discussion with a practical observation. 'Non-religious/irreligious'[132] is an applicable identity tag, a term that can be used to characterise one's background, or as an otherwise usable term for many respondents: in the 77 interviews, non/irreligion and derivative words were used in more than half - 40 - interviews. Out of these, only one respondent discussed the term in a negative sense, referring to those humanists who strongly emphasise their irreligiousness, and can therefore be considered as some sort of fundamentalists.[133] Twenty-five used the term as an identification for oneself personally, or for the group of individuals without religion. A further six respondents made positive references to the term, and seven respondents used it in an unprejudiced way. Besides these, one respondent stated not being religious, without using the Finnish term *uskonnoton*. These observations indicate that the term is not another instance of academic jargon with little or no connection to everyday life; at least in the Finnish context it seems to have important emic relevance for the participants of this study.

From the discussion so far the relationship of non-religion to various other terms can be summarised in the following way:

1) *Secular and this-worldly,* (group identity: secularists; this-worlders) encompassing both stances which differentiate from religion, and those which have no reference to religion, either positive, neutral or negative. These terms could also in principle be used in some religious contexts, as with pantheistic religions, or with secular clergy.

2) *Non-religion* (group identity: the non-religious) defined in relation to religion, by differentiation. The differentiation can range from open hostility through more neutral dispositions to positive differentiation, where religion is seen as *both* different *and* worthy of appreciation, or even desirable.

3) *Irreligion* (the irreligious), defined by differentiation from religion, carrying both out-group and rejecting connotations

4) *Atheism, scepticism, freethought* (atheists, sceptics, freethinkers), representing various nuances of differentiation from religion. None of the terms automatically imply rejection of all religious phenomena, hence the need for specifying the context or qualifying the particular term.

This scheme has a shortcoming in that secular humanism does not neatly fit in it. If secular humanism is understood as it is defined by IHEU quoted above, their program includes an articulated differentiation from theism in addition to the general focus on improving the human this-worldly experience. It does not quite fit into the above structure, since it includes both a particular differentiation from religion, which would make it a candidate for inclusion in group 4), *and* a this-worldly emphasis, which would motivate its placement in between 1) and 2). Other than that, the scheme summarises the previous discussion on non-religion and its relationship to other key terms of this study.

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[132] The Finnish word is '*uskonnoton*', which could also be translated as irreligious.

[133] JK1014

I will henceforward refer to the respondents collectively as the non-religious, or non-religious individuals; however, it should be understood that the non-religious experience in Finland, in general and in this study in particular, also involves a variety of more specific non-religious perspectives which I have discussed in this section - atheism, secular humanism, scepticism and freethought.

I will next consider worldview as an important aspect of non-religion, deserving attention. Worldview as a theoretical concept has been defined in a variety of ways. I will discuss the worldview theory, and it will be easier to focus that discussion appropriately now that non-religion and its related terminology has been clarified for the present purposes.

3. WORLDVIEW THEORY

In a recent publication, André Droogers and Anton van Harskamp advocate that the academic discipline of religious studies should expand to worldview studies. They argue that modernisation, understood as application of science and technology in society, contributes to transformations in today's worldview landscape. New social forms and increasing individualisation enable exploration and construction of personal worldviews. Spirituality and secular views become valid options to traditional religions. At the same time, migration takes believers to new environments. It is also necessary to consider the appearance and existence of New Age, syncretistic religions, growth of charismatic religiosity and fundamentalism. On these grounds, Droogers and Harskamp make the case that the picture of a world divided geographically between five world religions is outdated.[134] From the perspective of this study, however, the most serious problem in the model is leaving the non-religious as a left-over category. Considering the size of this group, an investigation into its internal dynamics rather than defining it only through what it is not is necessary.

The idea of worldview as a parent category that encompasses both religious and non-religious subcategories is not new. Kierkegaard suggested a typology of religious, ethical and aesthetical worldviews.[135] Other theorists such as Wilhelm Dilthey and Karl Jaspers have, likewise, long ago proposed that worldview be the super-ordinate category that accommodates both religions and other kinds of worldviews. More recently, Ninian Smart has proposed the extension of the philosophy of religion to the philosophy of worldviews.[136] In Smart's view, the worldviews can be compared with one another along the various dimensions that a worldview consists of. In Finland, there are some well-known applications of the the worldview-concept in religious studies, both with a long time-span: whereas Juha Pentikäinen has studied extensively the worldview of only one person, Helena Helve's studies on worldviews of youth are an example of an attempt to capture the worldview of a particular age group.[137] Other examples of worldview studies on specific populations in Finland are Sinikara's (librarians) and Pessi's (graduate engineers and architects) PhD dissertations.[138] An example of an international worldview study initiated in Finland is that of Nils G. Holm and Kaj Björkqvist, who led a collaboration that examined the worldviews of university students in ten

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134 Droogers and Harskamp 2014: 1. I agree and add that even the historical validity of the model needs to be criticised as Eurocentric, as it overlooks important strands of East- and South-Asian religiosity such as Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Jainism and Sikhism which both, with numbers of adherents and historical significance, would deserve the world-religion-tag with the same criteria as Judaism. In the contemporary situation the reification of the model becomes untenable: With the diaspora of East- and South-Asians all over the globe, it no longer makes sense to exclude these traditions on the grounds of geographical distribution either.

135 Naugle 2002: 76-80; Kierkegaard preferred the term lifeview, but used the two synonymously

136 Smart 1996: 2-3

137 Pentikäinen 1971; Helve 1993. Pentikäinen's study is based on material collected within a time-period of 12 years, Helve's corresponding time-span is 10 years.

138 Sinikara 2007; Pessi 1984

countries.[139] All of these examples have relevance for the present study, where using a broad array of worldview statements,[140] targeting a specific[141] and rare[142] population (non-religious group affiliates), individual worldviews[143] are used to find interpersonally shared and differentiating elements.

We need a parent concept that can accommodate both non-religious and religious views. In societies like Finland where religious affiliation has been on the decline for some time, it becomes increasingly difficult for one religious denomination to insist on a dominant position; likewise, religions in plural cannot claim hegemony over non-religious worldviews. Also, besides the lack of data regarding the differences between religious and non-religious worldviews, the assessment of similarities between the stances is yet to be done. To methodologically approach such a situation requires a broader conceptual framework, and such a meta-perspective could be provided by adopting worldview as a parent concept and substituting worldview studies for religious studies.[144]

The other option is that the field of religious studies remains named as it is, finding new ways of approaching the increasingly fluid entity called religion,[145] and a new field of scientific inquiry is established, which predominantly focuses on the non-religious viewpoints. To some extent, this is already taking place. The newly established NSRN-network,[146] ISSSC[147] and "The Diversity of Non-religion"-research-team at the Goethe University in Frankfurt are examples of how the academic study of secularity and non-religion is becoming established. In my opinion, both options are valid. Just as within religious studies the focus can be on particular religions, and at the same time there are academic departments that focus specifically on a particular family of religions (Indology)

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[139] Holm and Björkqvist 1996. The participants were from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, USA, Mexico, India and Japan. Using scales that measured 14 worldview types, the study shows how worldview types correlate with personality, geographic location, gender, and how they are affected by upbringing and historically significant events. The fall of the Soviet Union both increased the tendency towards mysticism in Poland, and affected the profile of a typical mystic. See Doktor 1996: 47-56 for details.

[140] The final version of the inventory used by Holm et al. contains 94 worldview items and other items that do not assess worldview types, such as personality, relations to parents, and expectations of future. See Holm 1996:4. The items used in the present study are comparable in their scope of topics.

[141] Helve 1993

[142] Sinikara 2007 and Pessi 1984

[143]Pentikäinen 1971. Obviously, there is no chance of getting anywhere near the depth of Pentikäinen's study here. The relevance of Pentikäinen's example for present purposes is by taking an individual's worldview very seriously.

[144] Droogers 2014: 14-15

[145] Lassander 2012: 240-241; Taira 2010: 379

[146] Non-religion and Secularity Research Network

[147] Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture

or on a particular religion (the various theology departments), there is no reason why separate departments for studying non-religion could not co-exist with religious studies that focus on the differentiation from religion. The history of religious studies exemplifies a variety of approaches to investigate the positive interest in religion. A similar variety of approaches could be applied to the negative interest - non-religion, irreligion, anti-religion, anticlericalism, atheism, agnosticism, scepticism, secular humanism, etc. In both cases, the proposal of using worldview as a parent category, encompassing the sub-categories religion, spirituality, non-religiousness - and their innumerable permutations - is sensible.

The worldview-concept is not without its problems. It has been criticised for the specific connotations of its constituent parts, world + view, which suggest an immanent frame and a static, visual orientation. Furthermore, the original German term *Weltanschauung* carries the idea of a particular vantage point, and hence the perspective of a particular individual, nation, class or historical period.[148] The idea of a comprehensive and unified perspective may be challenged by empirical observations, where an individual's worldview can in fact contain several adjacent systems and conflicting elements.[149] The term has also been considered cognitively biased, leaving emotional and experiential aspects out or to the periphery. Other than that, concerns have been raised about the term being overly broad in scope, under-theorised,[150]vague, not taken up in mainstream discourses[151] or without an established predominant understanding despite being extensively theorised. Different disciplines may use the term in different ways. Consider the different ways of using the term in psychology[152]and anthropology[153], both empirically oriented inquiries, yet one is about individuals and the other about societies. These can, in turn, be contrasted with philosophy and theology, both of which have a theoretical orientation, but different epistemological assumptions, and hence different criteria for worldview assessment. Worldview has also been defined differently within one and the same discipline.[154]

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148 Hiebert 2008: 13-14

149 Ketola 1997: 10-11; Holm 1996: 2

150 Lee 2012b: 138

151 Lee 2012a: 196. Lee refers to Michael P. Levine's (1997) criticism of Ninian Smart's idea of replacing the philosophy of religion with the philosophy of worldviews.

152 Naugle 2002: 211-222; Koltko-Rivera 2004; Nilsson 2013

153 Naugle 2002: 239-249; Hiebert 2008; Österman 2007: 93-133

154 See Naugle 2002 for general examples and historical overview, Koltko-Rivera 2004 for examples within psychology, and Hiebert 2008 within anthropology.

Without an established definition, some confusion is to be expected. Some theorists have focused on different aspects of worldview without an integrating framework.[155] Others have used different terms when they have been talking about the same concept;[156] Artur Nilsson has noted at least four different types of theoretical worldview concepts.[157] Other terms have been suggested, such as *concept of reality, lifeview, world interpretation, ethos, zeitgeist, outlook of life, world event, world metaphor, world order, world theory, world hypotheses, cultural core, root paradigm* and *plausibility structure*.[158] Candidates with a more religious connotation such as *credo*[159] and *faith*[160] have been proposed. Relevant for non-religious studies, *existential culture*[161] and *meaning system*[162] have been advocated to be used as the parent category to accommodate different kinds of worldviews. The various terms capture particular nuances each in their own way. Without claiming that worldview be the best candidate for all contexts, I argue for the usefulness of the term in the present study. It is well-known and has been widely used since the early 19th century. It has been theorised extensively, and used in a variety of academic inquiries, even though the variety of perspectives suggests that the scholar of non-religion cannot evade the task of explicating the particular way the term is used in the study at hand.[163] That is what I will do next. I will begin by examining the term etymologically to address the concerns about the connotations of the constituents of the compound word. After that I will assess various theoretical viewpoints to find a suitable perspective. I will conclude by presenting a working definition for the present study.

3.1 Etymology of Worldview

The compound word *worldview* is usually understood as an English translation of the German word *Weltanschauung* - a philosophical concept first introduced by Immanuel Kant. A less known German word, *Weltansicht*, can also be translated as 'worldview', even though both in the German lan-

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155 Nilsson 2013: 14

156 Koltko-Rivera 2004: 4

157 Nilsson 2013: 68

158 Enwall 1989: 113; Hiebert 2008:15

159 Enwall 1989: 113, 116

160 See Bae (2003) for a summary and elaboration on the concept of faith, based on the thought of Wilfred Cantwell Smith.

161 Lee 2015: 159-184. Prior to this, Lee has suggested the term epistemological culture (Lee 2012a)

162 Zuckerman, Galen and Pasquale 2016: 13-14

163 According to Knuuttila (1989: 190), variation between different ways of using the concept in academic inquiries is most visible in the level of abstraction that the investigation is focusing on. For Georg Henrik von Wright (1997: 19) worldview refers to the conception of cosmogony, structure of the universe, explanation of natural events, and the proper way of life, typical for a historical period or society. At the other end of the spectrum, changes in an individual's perspective, for instance due to maturing, trauma, conversion or deconversion, can be the object of study.

guage, and in the understanding of the theorists who introduced the concepts, the two words have different meanings. I will elaborate on this later. In both German words and in their English equivalent, the idea of seeing which stands for knowing is present.

The metaphor where 'seeing' stands for understanding and knowing has ancient origins. The reconstructed root of the verb *to see* in Indo-European is **weid-*, which in Greek develops to both *eidon* (to see) and *oida* (to know). The latter is the source of the English word *idea*, whereas the Latin derivative *videō* ("see") has been widely adopted due to the availability of the electronic medium with the same name. Furthermore, English words such as *witness* (knowing by having seen), *wit* and *wise* are derived from the original root **weid-*.[164] On the other side of the Indo-European divide we find *Veda* (close to the Swedish verb *veta* - to know; *vetenskap* - science) which stands for both knowledge and perception. What kind of perception? Veda specifically means "I have seen, I know."[165] Interestingly, Veda as the sacred knowledge was, and is still being passed down as an oral tradition where hearing is the primary way of receiving knowledge - which, nevertheless, has the etymological connotation of the visual experience. This connection is clear in such contemporary usages as re-view: assessing something to form a comprehensive understanding.

Besides the directly visual connotations, 'view' can stand for affective mental operations encompassing subjective preferences and evaluations: *in my view* or *from this point of view* stand for opinions, whereas in "prospective buyers are requested to make an appointment *to view* the house," seeing is combined with an intention: inspection for a purpose. In "farmers are viewing the rise in rabbit numbers with concern," viewing stands for regarding something with a particular attitude. Combined with other words such as *with a view to*, hope, aim or intention is expressed.[166]

What is then the object that is 'viewed' or known? *World* is originally a compound noun, derived from the Germanic *weraz* (man) and *aldh-* (age), which is evident in the Old English *weoruld. Werewolf* is a present day word where 'were' refers to man. By the 10th century, the meaning had expanded to encompass additional to mere human existence, also the "earth and all that is in it."[167]

In the present day, the connotation of life is found in instances like "Parents are the most important people in the child's world" and "When his wife died, his entire world was turned upside down."[168] *World* can also refer to other forms of life, as with 'animal world' or 'plant world'. Geographically, the meaning of *world* can expand to encompass the whole universe, or world and its inhabitants, whereas with qualifiers, the scope can be narrowed to a particular geographical part of the planet or to a specific cultural, historical or socioeconomic sphere (the Western World, the Arab World, the

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164 Sweetser 1990: 33-34

165 The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language 1969/1970: 1548

166 http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/view

167 Flavell and Flavell 1997: 264

168 Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 2015: 1801

Third World). Societally, the collective dimension is reflected in expressions such as 'We live in a rapidly changing world' and 'the world's response to Lindbergh's flight'.[169]

The connotations so far have a this-worldly emphasis, whereas with the qualifier *next,* world denotes an other-worldly dimensions, and becomes applicable to religious views.

The connotations with time, ways of life and eternity on the one hand, and with space and geographical locations on the other are all captured when *world* is qualified by the suffix *view*. A question could be raised, whether *worldview* itself needs to be qualified to make clear which particular meanings of the compound word we want to capture. Not only in its etymological history, but very much also in the present day usage of worldview, *view* stands not only for perception and understanding, but encompasses affective and volitional functions as well. Likewise, whereas a word by word translation would indicate simply perceiving the world accessible to sense-perception, we cannot disregard the wide variety of ways how *worldview* has been historically understood. Even though for the purposes of investigating non-religion it would be technically defensible to maintain that *worldview* simply means a this-worldly perspective, that would unnecessarily remove *worldview* from the context of both its history and its many present day understandings. There is nothing in the etymological history of the constituents of the compound word which would problematise the adoption of *worldview* as a parent category for non-religious perspectives. The fact that many contemporary Christian thinkers have adopted the term, while discussing the *Christian worldview*[170] as a viable option amongst other worldviews, suggests the usefulness of the term in religious contexts as well.

As a compound word the term has a rich and interesting independent history. A cursory reading of the history of the concept[171] shows, like with the terms religion and non-religion, a lack of general consensus. In the following section, I will make a selective overview of various theoretical perspectives to arrive at a working definition.

3.2 Theoretical Perspectives to Worldview

Worldview can be discussed both as an inner structure, where the focus can be placed on individuals (Jaspers, Dilthey) or societies (Wittgenstein, Kant) and as an observable expression (Smart, Sire; both discuss socially shared worldview expressions). I will discuss the inner structure of the worldview in this chapter, and consider the expressions of worldview in the next chapter where I link these considerations to my methodological choices.

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[169] The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language 1969/1970: 1475

[170] See Naugle 2002; Sire 2009; Hiebert 2009 for examples

[171] Naugle 2002

Understanding the inner structure of the worldview is dependent on what is meant by the term. Here it is useful to turn to the various thinkers who have both used the term and elaborated on it theoretically. Immanuel Kant coined the German term *Weltanschauung* to refer to the phenomenal outlook of the world, consisting of a priori categories shared by all humanity. In Kant's original usage, worldview was a socially shared and intuitive construct. After Kant, different thinkers theorised about the concept in different ways. For Freud, worldview was both a culturally shared and an *intellectual* construct.[172] For Hegel, it was a culturally and historically contingent spirit of the age. Wittgenstein considered the way of life of a particular population and the corresponding view of the world inseparable. Anthropology with its concern for understanding the culturally other has throughout its history regarded relativism as a methodological, although not philosophical, necessity, arising from sensitivity to the plurality of worldviews - to avoid superimposing the researcher's own cultural categories on the object-culture.[173] In present day social science, worldview is often used to refer to a perspective that is shared by a group.[174] Existential thinkers, like Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, emphasised the individual's responsibility to set free from the constraints of the socially approved perspectives and to construct her personal worldview. In this project, the individual might have to go against the spirit of the times,[175]even against the Kantian categories.[176] Other worldview thinkers have discussed the role of the non-theoretical aspects and unconscious influences, either for a personal[177] or for a culturally shared worldview.[178]

The different theoretical perspectives can be illustrated with the following fourfold table:

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172 Freud 1964: 158

173 Österman 2007: 97-100; Knuuttila 1989: 165

174 Weir 2012: 13

175 McCarthy 1978: 136-137

176 Naugle 2002: 98-103

177 Wilhelm Dilthey, see Naugle 2002: 82-97. Karl Jaspers, see Naugle 121-128. Anders Jeffner, see Jeffner 1976: 40-41

178 Ludwig Witttgenstein (Naugle 2002: 148-162); Karl Mannheim (Naugle 2002: 222-227); Michael Kearney (Naugle 2002: 239-245)

	personal/individual	cultural/social
theoretical/intellectual	Nietzsche Kierkegaard	Freud Smart
intuitive/pre-theoretical	Dilthey Jaspers	Wittgenstein Kant

1: Perspectives to worldview theory[179]

On the upper left quadrant, we find theorists who emphasise the individual's possibility, even responsibility for personal worldview construction.

On the upper right quadrant, we find theorists who discuss worldviews as socially shared systems that can be expressed in theoretical or dogmatic terms.

On the lower left quadrant, we find theorists who discuss worldviews as individual and intuitive or pre-theoretical constructs.

On the lower right quadrant, we find theorists for whom worldview is a socially shared, largely pre-theoretical or intuitive structure.

I will discuss the quadrants now in more detail in order to arrive at a perspective that suits the needs of the present study best.

3.2.1 Individual-Social-Dimension in Worldview Theory

Since the basic idea for targeting participants is affiliation with the non-religious organisations, the social aspect of the worldview cannot be denied. It is reasonable to assume that affiliation, even if informal and loose, nevertheless indicates from the part of the individual some agreement with the general agenda of the particular organisation. Yet if that was all, we could just read the official programs of the organisations, perhaps augmented by interviews of persons in leadership positions, and

[179] The table is based on David Naugle's historical overview, and adapted from Nilsson 2013: 68.

conclude the study. Clearly not sufficient to answer the basic kinds of questions that I raised at the introduction. The individual is not *only* a carrier and receiver of a worldview. One of the questions raised earlier about the validity of the world religions-paradigm arises from the observation that in the later-modernity, an individual can construct her personal worldview in increasingly creative ways.[180] People simply cannot be assumed to automatically subscribe to the tradition they were born into, nor can they be assumed to subscribe 100% to an organisation's official proclamations. To what extent they do and how much they differ is precisely what needs to be studied. Organisations are not different from their members, and official proclamations as well as action plans are both written and carried out by individuals, who choose to agree or opt out. One example is the Freethinkers' campaign to let people swap their Bibles for pornographic magazines; the campaign certainly received attention, but was criticised even by some members.[181] There is, hence, interplay between the establishment and the individual. The participants of this study are choosing to represent a social movement by their personal involvement in this study. We are studying both the common ground of the non-religious individuals as they personally choose to express it, and variation arising from differences in viewpoints.

The processual nature where worldview is both adopted from society by an individual, and from the individual reflected back to the society has been explained by a three-stage procedure by André Droogers:

1) Individuals seek answers to basic worldview questions.

2) The answers are expressed through different dimensions of a socially shared worldview. These could be religious texts, stories of divine beings and churches, but also ideological programs, life-histories of people who fought for the cause, and secular buildings dedicated to the ideology.

3) People are socialised to the worldview as it is expressed and cemented in stage 2. They internalise a socially approved worldview, yet they may find it unsatisfactory in certain respects, and hence the cycle begins again from the first stage. [182]

The cycle illustrates both the dynamics of how religions are reformed or transformed, and what goes on all the time in all ideologies on a smaller scale. People interact, and by doing so, receive and give elements of each other's worldviews. Sometimes worldviews are passionately, and even aggressively defended against change. Yet at the same time, people's innate curiosity to learn new things drives their worldviews towards change and renewal.

If the emphasis is too much on the group, defining all respondents becomes a project of finding the lowest common denominators. It would not be a particularly interesting result, if we found out that all respondents agree upon that the theory of evolution has more credibility than the Biblical account of creation. We cannot go to the other extreme either. Interesting as it might be, to create per-

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[180] Droogers and Harskamp 2014: 1

[181] Ylikoski 2010

[182] Droogers 2014: 25

sonal worldview profiles for every one of the respondents is simply beyond the scope of this study. The realistic middle ground between these extremes is to approach individual viewpoints with due respect, and by using these viewpoints as units of study, to arrive at more general kinds of conclusions that can be used to describe the respondents as a group. The basic unit of the investigation is the individual.

As a representative of a particular worldview tradition, there may be a temptation for both the person representing and for the scholar investigating to reduce the individual viewpoint to the official doctrine. While I was conducting fieldwork interviewing yoga-teachers in Sweden,[183] I ran into this phenomenon more than once. The interviewees sometimes stopped to ponder over whether the viewpoint they were about to express was in line with the tradition they represented. Obviously, one chooses to represent and belong to a particular worldview tradition if that tradition feels personally meaningful, which is particularly the case with people who represent a tradition which is not the national norm. This applies both for yoga and non-religion. Yet, as Berger and Luckmann have pointed out in the sociology of knowledge, the official doctrines, prominent philosophies or theories are only a small part of all socially shared knowledge.[184] It is necessary to throw a much wider net and capture the viewpoint of the ordinary person as well.

Therefore, it makes sense to focus on the individual's point of view even if the focus was on investigating socially shared systems. If the socially shared system is already largely known, the investigation can proceed based on a theoretical pre-understanding, and a quantitative approach can be utilised to check the validity of the pre-understanding. However, in a situation where there is no global consensus about the worldviews that "ought to" be out there, the importance of hearing the individual's own voice becomes more important. This is generally the case in the study of non-religious individuals, which is an emerging field of academic enquiry where much theorisation is still to be done. This is also the situation regarding the study of non-religious individuals in Finland. Since the basic unit of investigation in this study is the individual's viewpoint, I will use the term *worldview* to refer to the individual's perspective. Since these personal viewpoints are used to arrive at socially shared perspectives, I will use another, term, *worldview prototype* (or just prototype) for the socially shared viewpoint, with which individuals are associated with to various degrees.

The processual and dynamic nature of worldviews - the fact that the individual worldviews are not rigid but undergo transformation - can be taken into account in the assessment by recognising that we are using the perspective at the time of the assessment. Claims are not made that the assessed worldview would be representative of other phases of the same person's life- and worldview history.

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[183] Kontala and Lassander 2013

[184] Naugle 2002: 230

The next question is to consider whether the appropriate understanding of the term worldview is in terms of intuitive and unconscious structures, or whether it is more appropriate to speak of an explicitly elaborated worldview. The continuum between the two opposite poles can be called the intutitive-theoretical dimension in worldview theory.

3.2.2 Intuitive-Theoretical-Dimension in Worldview Theory

Unlike Kant, Freud thought of worldview as an intellectual construct. According to him, worldview is an *intellectual* and *cultural* construction, where an overriding hypothesis is used to solve all problems of existence, answer all questions and assign a fixed place for all issues of interest. Believing in it provides security in life. It informs one about life's appropriate goals and how to deal most expediently with one's emotions and interests.[185]Clearly, the theoretical and intellectual is emphasised over the emotional, as particularly the last point in the list makes clear. Other theorists have held positions similar to Freud.

Whereas for Freud the intellectual worldview was socially shared or cultural, Soren Kierkegaard placed the individual in the centre by emphasising "the duty and importance of the individual to understand himself, both his "premises" and his "conclusions," his conditionality and his freedom." The individual had to personally answer these questions; in this task "he cannot take his cue from the spirit of the age which will all too readily answer on his behalf."[186] Not everyone will have such a personal worldview, and for those who manage to acquire one, it is the result of the sum total of one's life-experiences, an illumination about life, where life is understood backwards through the emerging worldview, or lifeview, as Kierkegaard would often name it.[187]

Karl Jaspers' worldview theory represents a position between the Kantian taken-for-granted mental categories, and Freud's overriding intellectual hypothesis. As the name of his major work - *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen* - suggests, Jaspers approached worldviews psychologically. He divided worldview to a subjective and an objective part. The subjective part - the different attitudes the individual could have towards the world, or as it presents itself in the world picture - was the result of innate ideas[188] - or childhood experiences.[189] When the subjective part encounters the objective world, a representation called world picture is born. Both of these parts arise from a third one, a "spirit-type", a characteristic way an individual responds to life's liminal situations, such as

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185 Naugle 2002: 213

186 McCarthy 1978: 136-137

187 Naugle 2002: 76-77

188 An idea similar to Kant's

189 The role of childhood experiences in the development of the worldview was already introduced by Kierkegaard, and after Jaspers notably by Wittgenstein.

conflict, suffering, guilt and death. According to Jaspers, images of reality are a construct of the self, even though the self may not be aware of their influences or how they are formed.[190]

Jaspers' ideas of the role of early experiences in the formation of the worldview, the role of emotions and experiences, and the underlying dispositions - spirit-types for Jaspers - have been addressed more recently: the development of beliefs and attitudes have been attributed to early socialisation of the individual,[191] her rationalisations of first-hand experiences,[192] and her gradual psychological development.[193] Worldviews develop for and in the context of action, where their practical value is tested.[194] In adulthood, emotionally and existentially powerful life-experiences can mould the worldview.[195] Even though worldviews are resistant to disconfirmation and revision,[196] worldview revisions are nevertheless possible in the context of trauma recovery, religious conversion,[197] or mystical peak-experiences.[198] The idea of a particular way of responding to life - Jaspers' spirit-type - has been addressed by several theorists and researchers,[199] usually distinguishing between optimistic and pessimistic dispositions towards life.[200]

As a recap of the previous discussion along the individual-collective and intuitive-theoretical dimensions: Various theoretical perspectives have been presented, representing the different quadrants on the fourfold table. In the present study, the worldviews of individuals are used to arrive at worldview prototypes that consist of socially shared elements. The present investigation focuses on those aspects of the individual worldviews that are accessible, in other words what can be brought to the conscious awareness of the respondent during the investigation. These personal worldviews are the raw-material for arriving at more general conclusions, or worldview prototypes.

The next topic concerns the content of the worldview. If worldview is understood as a broad and comprehensive framework, the number of possible items to be included vastly exceeds what is possible to capture within an assessment of a minimal amount of hours. It is therefore necessary to

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190 Naugle 2002: 121-126

191 Maccoby 2014: 13-37; Helve 1997: 140-141

192 Inglehart and Welzel 2005: 98-99; Nynäs and Lassander 2010: 5

193 Piaget 1977: 186-193; Nynäs and Lassander 2010: 5

194 Rauste-von Wright 1997: 32

195 Nilsson 2013: 74. See McAdams 2006 for examples of life-changing "redemption"-events in personal narratives. According to Dilthey, worldview would be rooted in experience and life; see Naugle 2002: 85

196 Koltko-Rivera 2004: 26; Nilsson 2013: 89

197 Nilsson 2013: 89

198 Koltko-Rivera 2004: 24-25

199 Christian theologian van Dooyeweerd discussed two basic dispositions of the soul; see Naugle 2002: 26.
In the psychology of religion, William James devised a typology consisting of healthy-minded and sick-souled types.

200 Westerlund 2001; Jeffner 1976; Nilsson 2013: 85

discuss the contents of worldviews, and this discussion can be aided by considering the function of the worldview. This explains why we have worldviews in the first place.

3.2.3 Functions of Worldview

For an individual, the two basic functions that a worldview can fulfil are the practical and the existential function.[201]

Practical function. A worldview consists of beliefs and assumptions that give us functional information about the world in which we live, and about ourselves as part of it, to enable our orientation in our ecology and to get along in our life. To enable us to navigate in our daily lives, we need not only understand what leads us where. We also need to have a grasp of the basic conceptions about humanness and world that are predominant in our culture. This understanding develops in the context of and for practical action. Its value is based on how much it helps us to adapt and survive.[202] Since a worldview develops in the interaction between the individual and the world, every personal worldview contains unique features. Yet it must also contain enough of common ground to enable communication and reciprocation with others.[203]

Even though an effective worldview provides us with a script for survival and getting along in the daily life, it does more than that. Worldview is not only a theory of the world and things in it. It also contains the specialised meanings that we assign to the things and the world. Instead of a cold theory of the world, a worldview is a cognitive-affective whole that consists of personal meanings.[204]This brings us to the existential function of the worldview.

Existential function. Many theorists have emphasised that worldviews are reflections of the special human capacity for seeking, making and finding meaning in existence. Life seems to present us with a mystery that becomes particularly pressing when we are confronted with what Jaspers called liminal situations. Other theorists such as Dilthey, Kearney and Kierkegaard have likewise emphasised that we need to deal with the corruptible and existentially pressing aspects of existence. We encounter disease, guilt, pressure, and ultimately death. Yet we also find solutions to these dilemmas. Being itself is considered by some theorists as essentially chaotic and threatening. We need to protect ourselves against the threatening chaos by maintaining a protective structure. Worldview has

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[201] Nilsson 2007: 29-32

[202] Rauste-von Wright 1997: 31-32

[203] Keskinen 1997: 43

[204] Nurmi 1997: 60-68

thus an existentially protective function against meaninglessness. The existential dilemma can also be expressed in more positive terms. Thus, for Kierkegaard, arriving at a personal worldview is something of an illumination.[205] Experience of enlightenment, where human life finds its culmination and fulfilment, is also a persistent theme in Eastern religions.[206] We not only need a map for survival, but answers to the ultimate questions regarding the meaning of life as well.

Both the practical and the existential functions are important for human life. For the present purposes, the existential function is the more important one. If religion does not provide meaning to life, then what does? The existential function of worldview addresses our need for meaning. Even though it may be practically difficult for a respondent to arrive at a systematic elaboration of the personal worldview, it is nevertheless possible to bring the existing worldview assumptions into the open by engaging with research instruments designed to aid such elaboration. I will discuss this more in the next chapter. Before that, we need to consider the contents of the worldview.

3.2.4 Contents of Worldview

The contents of a worldview can be analysed categorically or dimensionally. In the categorical approach, the categorising principle is used as a criterion for arriving at idealised worldview types. Existing worldviews, as they are instantiated in real persons or groups of people, can then be assessed as belonging to one type or another. In philosophy, Dilthey arrived at a threefold worldview classification, where worldviews could be naturalistic, subjectively idealistic or objectively idealistic;[207] Jaspers analysed worldview based on an individual's idiosyncratic way of responding to life's ultimate situations;[208] Stephen Pepper established a scheme of six worldview types, grounded in their *root metaphors*, or characteristic ways of describing reality.[209]

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[205] Naugle 2002: 76-77

[206] Smart 2008: 13-150; Smart 2002: 43-164. I am using *enlightenment* loosely as a general term to refer to a moment of insight which allows the adherent to see the true nature of things, without claiming that the term would do justice to the articulations found in for instance Taoism and Yoga.

[207] Naugle 2002: 92-98. The first one represented an explanation of the world arising from physical experience of life; the second one emphasises the minds independence of matter, and the third one harmonises the first and the second. It would be tempting to interpret that he saw the third one as a superior perspective, but he does not favour any one decisively. Each one captures particularly well some aspect of reality, but no one has the whole picture

[208] Naugle 2002: 121-126. Three kinds of basic response types could be distinguished: scepticism, finite orientation (exemplified by rationalism, absolutism and authoritarianism), and turning to the infinite. From these arise subjective and objective aspects of a worldview. According to one's subjective attitude, the world is experienced actively, contemplatively, rationally, aesthetically, sensually, ascetically, or in other ways. The world, in turn, is represented in world pictures that fall into three broad categories: the sensory-space, the psychical-cultural and the metaphysical.

[209] Koltko-Rivera 2004: 9; The six root metaphors are animism, mysticism, formism, mechanism, organicism, and contextualism. Pepper found the first two to be inadequate, and described elaborately on the following four.

Another way of categorising worldviews is based on the specific substances rather than general features. To exemplify with epistemology, we could distinguish revelation contra empiricism and conclude that any tradition based on revelation belongs to the same category. Or we could distinguish two revelation-based worldviews based on the substantial content of the revelation: Bible- or Dhammapada. An example of an approach which combines general and substantial criteria is that of James Sire, arguing for the Christian worldview.[210] A well-known application of the categorical approach in religious studies is that of Ninian Smart. Smart presents a basic classification of major world-religions, based on substantial differences in how the worldviews are expressed along their different dimensions. Smart adds to the list of major world religions prominent secular ideologies, such as Marxism, nationalisms and secular humanism. The major features are presented through a list of basic dimensions of a worldview. These are 1) the ritual/practical; 2) the doctrinal/philosophical; 3) the mythic/narrative; 4) the experiential/emotional; 5) the ethical/legal; 6) the organisational/social; and 7) the material/artistic dimensions.[211]

Categorical approaches are particularly suited to illustrate a worldview that is already known due to previous research, which is the situation with the historical study of religions. If the worldview is not known, its relationships to categories can manifest in two ways. The first option is to assess how the emerging worldview is like or unlike existing categories. The second option is to use the new information to modify old typologies or create new ones. An example of an approach where categories are used as a point of departure for an empirical investigation is the research project *Humanitas et vita,* also known as 'World View and the View of Man', which uses three major worldview categories: religious, non-religious and quasi-religious/occult, each dividing into sub-categories, totalling altogether 14 different worldview types. These are then used to first create a survey, and then assess the respondents' loadings on the survey items to find how other features such as gender, culture, or personality type affect the loadings on the worldview types.[212] An example where categories are arrived at based on an empirical investigation is Christopher Cotter's study on non-religious university students. After analysing the interviews of his respondents, Cotter arrives at five basic non-religious worldview types.[213] The present study is of the latter exploratory type, where categories may emerge as the end-result, without being assumed at the outset.

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[210] Sire 2010. The list of major worldviews consists of Christian theism, deism, naturalism, nihilism, existentialism (both theistic and atheistic), Eastern pantheistic monism, postmodernism, New Age and Islamic worldview. Sire seems to change his criteria of categorisation according to the worldview he is trying to capture. From a dimensional point of view, Christianity and Islam are closer to each other in many respects, than the various traditions dumped into one worldview "Eastern pantheistic monism". That, however, would not serve his basic agenda, which is to highlight notable differences between Christianity and other worldviews. Understood in that way, his point of departure lies in the substantial content of Christianity, which then enables the reader to understand the substantial differences in other worldviews.

[211] Smart 1996: 10-11

[212] Holm and Björkqvist 1996

[213] Cotter 2011 and 2015

If worldviews can be categorised based on their internal differences, what are the important dimensions, *within* a worldview, that need to be considered as essential constituents? I will next turn to the structure of a worldview.

Synchronic Structure: In psychology and anthropology, the dimensional approach has been used in various ways. Some studies focus only on particular aspects of a worldview, whereas others aim at a comprehensive description. A well-known list of structural departments to be included in every worldview is presented by anthropologist James Redfield who distinguished the categories of self, others (human and non-human), space and time, life and death. So far the most elaborate model of this kind is presented by Mark Koltko-Rivera, arguing for a psychological approach to worldviews. Koltko-Rivera assembles previous and existing theoretical perspectives into one collated model, which has seven basic groups, or structural departments[214]: 1) Human Nature; 2) Will; 3) Cognition; 4) Behaviour; 5) Interpersonal; 6) Truth; 7) World and Life, which subdivide into 36 sub-departments. Each of these sub-departments have various possible instantiations.[215]

The collated model hints at just how multifaceted a worldview can be. There are some problems with using a very elaborate model to guide the assessment. First, it may be very difficult to assess all departments within one study. And even if it was possible, the amount of information may confuse the investigation. It becomes more difficult to find what is relevant, if there is a wealth of less interesting information. The assessment needs to be focused on the task at hand, in this case differentiation from religion. Second, even if all departments were assessed, the end-result would not tell anything about the primacy of the departmental instantiations for the respondent. For instance, what is the psychological significance of belief in God for the respondent?[216] An individual may hold an official belief in a higher power, yet in practice the this-worldly concerns may take precedence. Gordon Allport's distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity is well -known.[217] The assessment needs to recognise that not only a belief, but how the belief is held and what it means in the whole context of the individual's worldview is of importance.[218] The assessment should there-

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[214] Koltko-Rivera calls the structural departments groups, which further subdivide into sub-categories which he calls dimensions. I avoid the word 'dimension' in order not to confuse the internal structural departments with the externally manifested dimensions, as in Smart's model.

[215] For a detailed discussion about the instantiations along the sub-departments, see Koltko-Rivera 2004: 28-36

[216] Nilsson 2013: 115

[217] Originally Allport talked about mature and immature religiosity; see Allport 1950. For the extrinsic-intrinsic-distinction see Allport and Ross 1967.

[218] See Westerlund 2001: 178, Nilsson 2007: 18 and Spiro 1987: 163-164. According to Spiro, anthropologists have usually distinguished beliefs according to their salience to the believer, ranging from (1) mere acquaintance with the belief through (2) understanding its meaning to (3) holding it to be true, to (4) behaving differently because of it, and (5) infusing the belief with affective power. The problem with attributing action *only* to beliefs on levels 4 and 5 lies in the observation that people may behave based on implicitly held assumptions, which may be different from reported beliefs.

fore consider not merely the instantiations of individual beliefs and preferences, but also how the beliefs are held. In other words, what they mean to the respondent. Third, the structural analysis paints a static picture, whereas in reality, worldviews transform. In radical cases comprehensive revisions take place, as in conversions, deconversions, or after traumatic experiences. If the word 'worldview' and its structural analysis point to the metaphor of a static picture, a film-metaphor might be the more appropriate one to capture the dynamics of a worldview over time. In the present study this problem can be avoided by recognising that the assessed worldviews are snapshots, representing for the individual respondent one frame of the worldview film spanning from early childhood to death. Likewise for the group, a shared viewpoint or worldview prototype is what is observed during the period of the data-collection. Fourth, perhaps the most important feature of the worldview is that it is an organising system rather than a list of elements without any internal connecting structure.[219] A structural analysis of a worldview must not lose sight of the forest for its trees. It is crucial to at least try to assess what is central and what is peripheral to the worldview, not only a list of beliefs but a pattern with internal relationships. The whole system needs to be considered.

[219] From the evolutionary psychological point of view, a comprehensive worldview with inaccuracies about some details has been argued to be superior over a collection of highly accurate yet disparate details. According to Gabora (1999), "[i]ndividuals whose activation threshold is too small to achieve worldview closure are at a reproductive disadvantage, and, over time, eliminated from the population." Trivers (1976: vi) in his foreword to the first edition of *Selfish Gene* writes: "…the conventional view that natural selection favours nervous systems which produce ever more accurate images of the world must be a very naïve view of mental evolution."

Diachronic Structure: Not only do worldviews change over time, they are also internally structured reflecting the developing and changing nature of the human experience. This is evident in the narrative aspects of worldviews. A comprehensive worldview becomes more than its constituent parts only if the constituent parts form a single whole. A comprehensive worldview may even accommodate error in minor details and still work well, because it provides an over-arching understanding.[220] Narrative does precisely that. It integrates individual events into a narrative structure, so that the events are no longer isolated, but make sense as part of a larger story. This is not only the case with personal life-stories and realisations of lived life. The same goes for socially shared narratives, whether myths or official national histories. On the societal level, shared myths and stories may be amongst the most important adhesives that keep cultures together.[221] A comprehensive worldview assessment should recognise the value of narratives, and address them in a meaningful manner. In assessing non-religious worldviews, worldview histories that are characterised by stability or deconversion,[222] including experiences with religion that can be traumatic, positive or neutral, are examples of what can be salient.

Other Considerations: Not all aspects of the worldview assessment need be directly related to non-religion. Scandinavian worldview research, often under the heading of *lifeview*, has focused on the emotional aspects of the respondents.[223] According to Anders Jeffner, the basic emotional disposition towards life falls somewhere on the continuum between optimism and pessimism.[224] Katarina Westerlund has investigated the relationships between the basic attitudes and meaning systems amongst Swedes, and found that optimism and pessimism can be combined with both materialistic

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[220] Nilsson 2007: 31

[221] Nilsson 2007: 27

[222] Deconversion in the specific sense of a secularising exit, as opposed to other forms of deconversion, where the movement from a previous position to a new one takes place within a religious field. See Streib: 2012

[223] Kierkegaard, who coined the original term, *lifeview*, seemed to use it more or less synonymously with worldview. This does not automatically imply that the two terms should be synonymous. Holm (1996) has claimed that lifeview is more focused on the individual's perspective on her own life. It is also more restrictive than worldview, since it is more focused on the individual, and less on the humanity and the world at large. Other theorists such as Redfield, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard have recognised these differences without using different terms. Jeffner's underlying moods on the individual level have been studied interculturally by Hiebert (2008). I will differentiate the individual and social perspectives by reserving *worldview* mainly for the individual, and *worldview prototype* or *prototype* for the social.

It is perhaps fruitful to propose an understanding based on family-resemblances. The individual incorporates elements from the common pool of culturally shared worldview prototype to her personal worldview, which represents a unique permutation of instantiations across the dimensions, and a unique web of relationships between the dimensions, all of which are furthermore affected by the basic underlying worldview temperament, which again varies between individuals.

[224] Jeffner 1976: 40-41

and theistic beliefs.[225] Other theorists have held perspectives similar to Jeffner.[226] To assess basic moods may be valuable in providing different ways or modes of being non-religious. Moreover, since worldviews are likely to be influenced by lived and memorable experiences, assessing experiential and emotional aspects may be valuable, particularly when these experiences and emotions are caused by or directed towards religion, or even its absence. Stephen Bullivant presents a fascinating sample of irreligious experiences. Some accounts of despair notwithstanding, Bullivant's examples include emphatic awareness of the *absence* of God, or sensations of euphoria from the idea of God's non-existence.[227] Peak experiences, feelings of dejection and less intense emotions can in important ways differentiate between the non-religious worldviews.

I will now summarise the discussion so far, and will then move on to propose a worldview definition for the purposes of this study.

[225] Westerlund 2001: 172-205. Optimists were more likely to attribute causal explanations to human agency. In contrast, pessimists were likely to see fight for survival as an explanation of history, where they felt a lack of agency in their personal lives. Optimists were also more likely see meaningfulness as something humans assign to their lives, whereas for the pessimists, sources of meaning were unarticulated.

[226] Herman Van Dooyeweerd; Karl Jaspers; William James.

[227] Bullivant 2008: 8

3.3 Summary: Salient Aspects of Worldview for the Present Study

To focus the theoretical apparatus to what is relevant for the present study, I will review 1) quadrants of worldview theory; 2) function of a worldview; 3) categorical versus dimensional approach; and 4) content of worldview

Quadrants of worldview theory: The present study will examine worldviews as meaning systems that can be brought to consciousness. Since there are little established theories about what kinds of non-religious worldviews ought to exist out there, individual worldviews will be used as the basic units of observation. The personal worldviews should not be considered as frozen in time, but something that have the capacity to evolve throughout life. The analyses recognise this by not claiming that the worldview instantiation at the moment of assessment would be representative for the person's whole worldview history. The data obtained from these instantiations will lead to generalisations about socially shared elements. These generalisations will be called non-religious worldview prototypes.

Function of a worldview: Worldviews have both practical and existential functions. The practical function is about navigating and getting along in everyday life. Since the present study is concerned about meaning-making rather than practical problem-solving and every day utility, the existential function of a worldview needs to guide the considerations regarding the salient content of the worldview to be assessed. Therefore, worldviews are considered as systems that provide meaning, rather than maps for practical solutions.

Content of a worldview: An approach that uses a list of existing worldview types to categorise the worldview that is being investigated is particularly problematic when the theories are just being developed. Another approach would be to focus on factual instantiations along the different dimensions of a worldview. Even with such an approach there are problems that the assessment needs to overcome. To deal with the multifaceted nature of the worldview, the research question needs to guide the assessment. The focus needs to be on differentiation from religion. Moreover, the assessment needs to be sensitive to the internal structure of the worldview, where beliefs can be held in different ways, and the beliefs can be hierarchically structured within the worldview. I will elaborate on this more when I discuss the methodology in the next chapter. All of this does not rule out the importance of worldview typologies, but the investigation needs to be agnostic about the outcomes at the outset and let the typology emerge in a posteriori fashion.

The assessment needs to consider not only cognitive aspects of the worldview as a system of beliefs. It also needs to recognise experiential, emotional and evaluative aspects.[228] The assessment should therefore encompass features that are not directly related to the non-religious discourse, such as underlying moods and basic life orientations, to account for different perspectives. Evaluative aspects of the worldview will represent the cognitive part of values, to use the term of Rokeach,[229]

[228] Holm 1996: 2-3

[229] Rokeach 1973: 6-7

whereas value as an etic term refers to values as mostly unconscious motivational structures, something that the present study does not directly target.

Narratives: Personal life narratives and shared histories provide unifying structures that enable the integration of the otherwise isolated experiences and beliefs into a coherent system. There is need for sensitivity to any emerging patterns in the personal life-narratives of the non-religious individuals. The assessment needs to recognise prominent themes and possible counter-themes.

I will conclude this section by attempting to capture the above points in a definition of worldview for the context of this study.

3.3.1 Working Definition of Worldview

I will define worldview as referring primarily to an individual's worldview. I will reserve the terms *worldview prototype* and *prototype* when I specifically want to refer to a viewpoint shared by many respondents of this study. However, since worldview is commonly used to refer to both an individual's worldview and to a socially shared perspective, it is at times linguistically convenient to use the term worldview even in reference to a shared perspective. In such cases, the context will make clear this to be the case, and the risk for confusion is minimal.

On the individual level a worldview may be structured by unconsciously held priorities such. To recognise that the assessed and observed worldview may only represent a tip of an ice-berg, I use worldview in reference to such beliefs and preferences that can be brought to conscious awareness. Furthermore, the processual nature of worldview development needs to be kept in mind: The assessment uses snapshots into the worldview of the respondent, as it manifests during the assessment.

In order to keep the definition concise, there is no need to address all the possible structural departments of a worldview. My definition follows Peter Nynäs and Mika Lassander's definition that guides the larger research project, Viewpoints to the World, of which the present study is a part of:

> *Worldview is a single, comprehensive, general and explanatory system of assigning meanings to an individual's ideas and experiences.*[230]

Formulated in this way, the definition is context specific: suitable as a parent category for studying religious and non-religious worldviews. The existential function of the worldview is emphasised over the practical function. To emphasise existential over practical concerns, worldview is defined

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230 "*Worldview* is employed...as broader concept than religion. It is used in reference to an interpretative framework that people use to assign meaning to their experiences. Worldviews are comprehensive meaning systems that locate all experiences of the individual in a single general explanatory arrangement or strategy." Nynäs and Lassander 2012: 5.

as a system of meanings, rather than as a collection of beliefs. This is in line with the Scandinavian tradition of worldview research, which often has taken place with the name *lifeview,* a term originally coined by Kierkegaard. Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm[231] emphasises that even a stipulatory definition should not depart too far from how the term is understood in everyday usage of the word. Furthermore, a distinction needs to be made between an individual's personal worldview and worldview as a freely circulating system of ideas. I have suggested that in the present study, worldview primarily denote an individual's viewpoint, whereas a shared viewpoint be referred to as prototype or worldview prototype. Bråkenhielm further argues, that instead of incorporating every belief an individual may have, the worldview domain should be reserved for those beliefs that are central for a general and all-embracing understanding of reality. This allows us to leave out such beliefs that are situational or marginal for the whole gestalt.[232] Concerns for the criterion of centrality are addressed in the definition with words 'comprehensive' and 'general'. Besides beliefs, the worldview should also include answers to questions about what is most important in life. This aspect is addressed in the definition with 'assigning meanings'. As a system of meanings, a worldview also describes what goals and ideals are to be strived for. Finally, Bråkenhielm suggests that a worldview include a more experiential aspect, basic emotional posture[233], which is recognised in the definition by *assigning meanings* not only to an individual's *ideas*, but also to *experiences*.

With this definition, we can now turn to how non-religious worldviews are best investigated. This question leads us to consider how worldviews are expressed, and to the appropriate methodological solutions.

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[231] See Bråkenhielm 2001: 9-16 for the whole discussion about how to define *lifeview*, which for my purposes can stand more or less synonymous to the kind of worldview-concept I am proposing

[232] I may for instance believe that I need to catch a local commuter train no later than 6:10 PM to get home in time to teach my daughter how to play a certain melody on piano, as we had agreed. I may be right about the belief about the train schedule, or update the information, without this having any effect on the totality of my worldview.

[233] Anders Jeffner's original Swedish term is *grundhållning.* See Jeffner 1976: 40-41

4. METHODS FOR WORLDVIEW ASSESSMENT

The preceding discussion established how the present thesis uses the worldview-concept. The basic unit is an individual's personal worldview. Emphasising the existential function means worldview will be studied as a system of meanings. Such an investigation should lead to the emergence of non-religious worldviews. The present study is exploratory and does not aim at assessing whether the respondents' worldviews fit into existing worldview categories. The structural focus should be on the non-religious discourse. The choice of the appropriate methods for the investigation is tied to how worldviews are expressed.

4.1 How Worldviews are Expressed

If worldview is understood in the broadest sense of the term, as some theorists have done, it would become difficult to separate aspects of human behaviour and experience that are *not* influenced by our worldviews. I have chosen to limit the scope of worldview to a system of assigning meanings that can be brought to conscious awareness. This allows us to leave out such manifestations of human behaviour, where the intentional component is minimal. I illustrate this with an example that has been used by Svend Brinkmann to distinguish the space of causes from the space of reasons. When a doctor hits the patient's knee with a hammer, the impact causes the leg to jump, without any intentional consideration - the worldview of the patient did not affect the outcome. The relationship between the hitting and kicking is causal, and does not involve reasoning about other possible courses of action. On the other hand, the same patient can later reflect on this experience, which can then influence the future viewpoint. This may lead to the same patient getting annoyed with the doctor, and deciding to kick him with the same leg, now with full intention. The latter case involves consideration between options, and therefore takes place in the space of reasons,[234] appropriately belonging to the worldview domain.

Worldviews can be expressed in a variety of ways. Ninian Smart provides a useful checklist of seven basic dimensions for worldview expressions: doctrinal, mythological, ethical, ritual, experiential, institutional and material expressions. Even though Smart discusses only major, historically and globally significant cultural systems, such as Secular Humanism, Christianity and Islam, an individual can also express her worldview along these dimensions. She can subscribe to existing manifestations - by going to the local church, by reading Marxist literature etc - or she can express her personal worldview in new and creative ways. An individual's worldview can, likewise, have doctrinal, mythological, ethical, ritual, experiential, institutional and material expressions.

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234 The idea of starting the example with involuntary kicking when hit in the knee by a hammer is from Svend Brinkmann. The later, deliberate kicking is my own idea; Brinkmann uses another example to illustrate the same.

For the sake of simplicity, the expressions can be divided into linguistic and non-linguistic expressions. The latter can be further divided into mental operations and physical expressions. We are interested in the respondents' subjective meanings, which cannot be directly observed.
Therefore, studying them is dependent on the observable expressions, the linguistic expressions and the non-linguistic physical expressions. I will begin by discussing the latter one.

4.1.1 Non-linguistic Physical Expressions

The non-linguistic physical worldview expressions can be divided into explicit and implicit expressions. The explicit expressions are meant to signify a particular worldview, or some aspects of it. The implicit expressions manifest aspects of a worldview without a conscious attempt to do so. Examples of explicit expressions are religious or political symbols, rituals, or occasions that signify a stance. In the public sphere, monuments and special holidays signify religions, ideologies or nationalisms. Other explicit physical worldview expressions are bodily systems such as dance,[235]martial arts and yoga.[236] Like language, such codified bodily systems can give the individual tools by which to express her personal worldview. An individual may express the codified movements because she believes in the underlying shared worldview, such as a Balinese worldview for indigenous practitioners of Balinese dance, or because she (a hypothetical Western sceptic) likes Balinese dance as an exercise, having little or no interest in the underlying assumptions about reality. Other explicit expressions range from gestures to works of art.

Implicit expressions include behaviours, body languages and facial expressions.[237] Results from research in psychology are consistent with the worldview theories which suggest that worldviews can and do shape the affect, cognition and behaviour.[238] Worldviews could, in principle, be studied by observable behaviour. In practice, this is difficult, since the relationship between the subjective realm, the outside environment and the observable behaviour is complex. Even if we consider Smart's ritual dimension, where a socially shared worldview finds its expression in codified behaviour in a ritual setting, observing such behaviour only tells about the official proscriptions - what one is expected to do in a particular situation - and not necessarily anything about what motivates

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[235] See Halonen 1997: 66-67 for an elaboration of how a dancer in Balian culture can challenge spirits during the dance, otherwise experienced as fearful.

[236] Suryanamaskara or the series of movements called sun-salutation has been given a variety of interpretations, ranging from Sun-worship to Vaishnava interpretations. See Mallinson 2011

[237] Some of the expressions are not only implicit, but involuntary. Paul Ekman is one of the pioneers in analysing microexpressions, facial expressions that occur involuntarily and briefly (see Ekman 2003: 237) Such expressions can be captured by a high-speed camera, and analysed in slow-motion; see Polikovsky, Kameda and Ohta (2009) and Yan et al. (2014). It is questionable to which extent involuntary expressions are relevant for the present research project. Even though involuntary expressions could in principle be used to arrive at a more nuanced understanding about what has been explicated consciously, this may practically be very difficult, and is beyond the available resources.

[238] Koltko-Rivera (2004), 22-25

an individual to participate. The distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity is relevant within the study of religious worldviews.[239] In a place like Finland where most people belong to the Lutheran church, it is possible for someone to participate in a religious ceremony out of social obligation despite being an atheist, which is a possible scenario in the lives of the respondents of the present study.

It is difficult to determine the personal worldview underlying a particular behaviour, even though non-verbal expressions such as body language and facial expressions can yield important information, which in some cases might confirm or contradict a stated worldview. In such cases, one would have to further investigate whether the confirmation or contradiction is situational or more fundamental. A longitudinal study that focuses on just a few persons might solve the problem; however, this is not an option in the present context, where the focus is on a group of respondents with a relatively short assessment time available for each participant.

Possibilities for studying worldviews through non-verbal expressions exist. Particularly the practical function of the worldview might be studied without verbal elaborations, by observing how a person solves a problem or navigates through practical situations. Even then, verbal elaborations would be a more effective way of acquiring the same information. The respondent could simply elaborate on how she deals with a socially challenging situation such as saying no to the manager. Since some practical tasks require little abstract thinking, observation may in such cases yield more information. The linguistic expressions are, however, crucial for studying preferences related to the existential function of the worldview that are dependent on and expressed through abstract thinking.

The most reliable means for finding out how an individual assigns meaning to her experiences is by linguistic expressions, which must therefore be given methodological primacy in the present study. The crucial issue is that the non-verbal expressions, such as dance, gestures and non-verbal works of art, valuable as they might be, nevertheless seem to depend on the verbal elaboration. Without that, it would seem impossible to determine, whether a particular dancer or yogi subscribes to the traditional worldview that is codified in the system of bodily movements and positions, or whether the practitioner approaches it with a novel interpretation. Likewise, because of the primacy of the verbal expressions it is considerably more difficult to study the worldviews of children who are not yet able to speak, other than by attempting to rely on memories that are verbalised later on. It is clear that the primary venue of worldview study must be through verbal expressions and in the present study, the assessment is limited to that, even though at least theoretically, other expressions might aid a deeper understanding of the verbalised worldviews.

Many theorists have proposed that language is a central means for expressing a worldview. The strongest formulations of this position maintain that worldview is completely inseparable from lan-

[239] Allport and Ross 1967

guage, or is determined by language.[240] Agreeing or disagreeing with such a position may be resolved by clarifying the layer of language that is being discussed. I will illustrate this with a model of different levels where language and worldview are related to each other.

4.1.2 Layered Model of Worldview and Language

A contemporary of Kant, the linguist and philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt proposed an alternative term to Kant's *Weltanschauung*. Von Humboldt coined the term *Weltansicht*[241] to discuss his understanding about the relationship between language, thought and worldview. For him, Weltansicht would stand for the way language shapes the conception we have of the world and how we negotiate our way through life on a daily basis as we converse with others. Weltansicht therefore precedes the forming of a Weltanschauung, which can include various beliefs.[242] Since both German words can be translated as 'worldview', the different perspectives they convey are easily conflated into one, which is likely to confuse a theoretical discussion of worldviews. To overcome such a confusion, the layered model presented by James Underhill is useful for organising the various theoretical perspectives to linguistic expressions of worldview, particularly since different names are used for the different layers. The model consists of five concentric circles, each of which representing a particular layer of being in contact with the world, receiving and processing information of the world, elaborating on it, and communicating it back to the world. Underhill proposes that the two innermost circles, or most foundational layers, stand for what Humboldt wanted to capture with the term Weltansicht.

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[240] The strongest formulations of this position maintain that worldview is completely inseparable from language, is determined by language, that there is no objective reality outside a text making claims to describe such a reality, or that the objective reality is inaccessible. For Wittgenstein, language is inseparable from worldview. Peter Winch has argued that even such a foundational worldview principle as logic is rooted in the social relationships between men. See Winch 1990: 126. For the present study, Derrida's questioning of logocentrism has important implications. See Naugle 2002: 174-178. Whether we agree with Derrida or not about the inaccessibility/non-existence of the objective reality, his notion that the relationships within the text matter is valid. It is methodologically better to assume little if anything about the existing worldviews, and let the understanding arise from the text itself.

[241] *Weltansicht* could also be translated as 'worldview'

[242] Underhill 2009: 17-18

World-perceiving. The most foundational layer, *world-perceiving*, represents our changing and developing perception of the world.[243]

World-conceiving. The next layer, world-conceiving, represents the various ways the world as we perceive it enters our thought and language.[244] We represent things in the world and our experiences of the world with concepts and frameworks, which are closely related to the language we speak. Different languages differ in how they categorise flora, fauna,[245] colours,[246]genders,[247]or use metaphors.[248] The linguistic structures and concepts are the raw-material with which we can arrive at more elaborate meaning systems.

Cultural mindset. The next layer, cultural mindset, reflects precisely this: in the same cultural and linguistic area people can form different sub-groups, -cultures and counter-cultures.[249] We find Finnish atheists and Finnish Christians, political left and right, all sharing the same linguistic categories provided by the two main languages in Finland, that is, Finnish and Swedish. Within one world-conceiving culture, the same system of structuring experiences may be used differently, based on the different priorities that the sub-cultures or cultural mindsets hold.[250]

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[243] Underhill 2009: 134

[244] Underhill 2009:135

[245] Sahlins 1995: 157-162

[246] Regier and Kay: 2009; Gilbert et al: 2007

[247] Boroditsky, Schmidt and Phillips 2003: 61-78

[248] Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 42. If an object stands between me and a stone, in English language it is appropriate to say that the object is in front of the rock. This is reversed in Hausa language, where it would be more appropriate to say that the object is behind the rock.

[249] Underhill 2009: 135

[250] Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 22-24. The metaphors used in a language give the basic organisational structure, for instance by associating future or good with the spatial direction ‘up’. Sub-cultures representing different cultural mindsets may hold priorities opposite to the dominant cultural mindset. Yet since the sub-culture shares the basic world-conceiving system of language and metaphors, they express their different priorities with the same metaphors as the dominant cultural mindset. Lakoff and Johnson exemplify with Trappists, a monastic order, who use the general spatial metaphor of associating ‘more’ with ‘better’. Since the Trappists give virtue the highest priority, ‘more is better’ refers to increasing virtue, not material possessions. This exemplifies how cultural mindsets can disagree regarding fundamental priorities, and express their priorities with the same world-conceiving linguistic system.

It is in place to note that ideas can cross linguistic boundaries on the level of cultural mindset. Not only can we observe intra-cultural variation regarding different mindsets in one linguistic area, we can also observe how a particular mindset, say Buddhism, can cross linguistic and cultural borders. This is relevant in the bilingual Finland, and it is relevant in the present study where some respondents belong to the Swedish-speaking minority. The present study attempts to find non-religious worldview types at the level of Cultural mindset. These will be called worldview prototypes (or just prototypes).

Personal worldview.[251] Within one cultural mindset, individuals can agree and disagree on issues. This layer stands for an individual's particular version of the cultural mindset she adheres to.[252] It should be noted that an individual does not necessarily adopt and personally adapt only one cultural mindset. In the contemporary world, many cultural mindsets - ideologies, religions and meaning-systems - can be used in life's different segments.[253] The relationship between personal worldview and cultural mindset is best understood as a systemic relationship: an individual can use elements from several cultural mindsets, whereas a cultural mindset is best defined as a prototype of family resemblance: a pool of beliefs about and attitudes towards the world, which as such provides tools for an individual's personal meaning-making strategy.

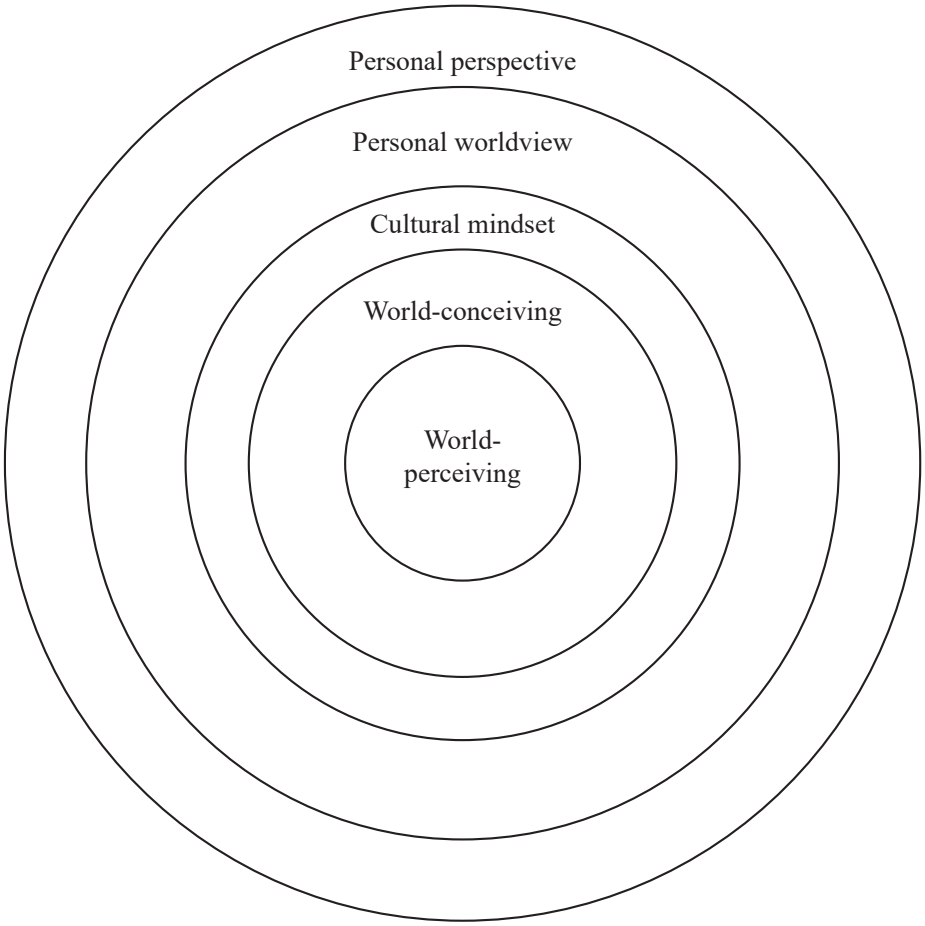
Personal perspective. Whereas some individuals may prioritise openness to change, and hence be more exploratory in their worldviewing, even those individuals who favour tradition and conservation may change some of their views during their life. Worldview development is a learning process, where development is more notable during the formative years. Even in adulthood changes do occur. Changes can of course be less pronounced and more gradual. To capture the processual nature of how we understand world, the last layer in the model is called personal perspective.

The following picture illustrates the various layers.

[251] Underhill uses the name personal world. My adaptation reflects my own perspective on the worldview theory.

[252] Underhill 2009:135

[253] McGuire 1997: 27-32



2. Worldview and language[254]

The interfaces between the different levels are somewhat fluid, and should be seen as distinctions rather than as exclusive categories. It may not be possible to determine where exactly *world-conceiving* ends and *cultural mindset* begins. The hierarchical layers described above can act as a map for understanding the different perspectives of worldview theory. This can be used as a background for locating the theoretical perspective of the present study. I am not focusing on how Finnish culture is different from Polynesian culture, nor am I assessing differences in how Finnish and Swedish languages categorise things compared to Polish or Hindi. Such comparisons would take place on the layer of world-conceiving. I am interested, rather, in differentiation from religion, which is a phe-

[254] Illustration adapted from Underhill 2009: 136. Underhill names the fourth layer differently, and discusses the layers somewhat differently. Therefore, the presentation above reflects my own views, whereas the basic idea is from Underhill.

nomenon on the level of cultural mindset - a distinct way of using language within the same cultural area. The task could be approached by studying the programmatic declarations of the various organisations and their notable spokespersons. I am, however, going to study people who are in some way affiliated to the non-religious organisations in Finland, without specifically focusing on persons with particular positions. The study will be about those elements of the personal worldviews of the participants that can be empirically assessed through verbal expressions.

The most foundational layer of world-perceiving may be at least to some extent prior to language.[255] It is relevant to mention some aspects of worldview that operate outside and independent of language. Understanding language needs to be considered separately from producing speech. It would be artificial to claim that children suddenly acquire a worldview after assuming a vocabulary of exactly N words, whereas prior to that they had none. Likewise, an adult is not likely to lose her worldview due to an aphasia caused by a sudden brain-stroke. These considerations point to worldviews existing partially independent of language. This may be particularly true for the practical function of worldview, whereas the existential function would at least be greatly aided by an ability to use linguistic symbols. On the other hand, there are mystical strands in various religious traditions which claim that the ultimate reality is beyond linguistic expressions. Such claims are nevertheless, and somewhat paradoxically, often expressed in language. Since such states may even be *doctrinally and verbally* established as the major goal of human life, it is perhaps more meaningful to talk of them as something that language cannot fully describe rather than something which is impossible to discuss or describe by words. The same could be said about any strong emotional experiences, or art. Strong emotional experiences, religious or not, that by their very nature seem to defy what language can capture, have nevertheless been reported in language, which indicates that they can be part of an assessment that primarily relies on language.

As a summary, it could be meaningful to distinguish between pre-linguistic, linguistic, and trans-linguistic aspects of a worldview. The pre-linguistic expressions are largely outside the scope of this study, as they either 1) represent the most foundational layers, and hence, are assumed rather than argued for; 2) are difficult to remember and describe afterwards, as in childhood experiences prior to the development of linguistic capacities, or 3) are simply practically very difficult to communicate. The trans-linguistic aspects related to important peak-experiences, mystical, religious or otherwise, can be part of linguistic assessment to the extent they lend themselves to verbal elaboration.

There are various ways in which language can be used to express the underlying worldview. This is most obviously the case with stated religious doctrines, political ideologies and philosophical systems. Other venues for linguistic worldview expression include poetry, songs and literature. Some theorists have maintained that few people can express their worldviews in explicit, elaborate and

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[255] Exactly how much sensory world-perceiving is biologically determined and language-independent is an open question. I have earlier alluded to studies which indicate that language has some effect on perception. See Berlin and Kay 1969: 104-110; Regier and Kay 2009: 1; Gilbert et al 2008: 1; Boroditsky, Schmidt and Phillips, 61-78

coherent systems.[256] Some have nevertheless done so. Famous examples are provided by religious founders and reformers, philosophers and political leaders. Religious and philosophical doctrines as well as worldview expressions through art are appropriate objects of investigations where the focus is on particular individuals who are specialists on such fields. We can study the worldviews of prominent philosophers, authors, religious reformers, or anti-religious voices. An example of this can be found in Teemu Taira's article[257], which compares the ways in which various atheist authors discuss spirituality. These are important aspects of worldview study. At the same time, since we are dealing with non-religion in the lives of ordinary people who in some ways are affiliated with the non-religious organisations, it would not be appropriate to use the works of prominent and vocal exponents of non-religion or anti-religion such as Dawkins and Hitchens to determine the discourse. Letting the worldviews arise from the empirical data may reveal important similarities between the worldviews of best-selling authors and the affiliated Finns, but such assumptions should not pre-determine the methods of investigation.

4.1.3 Challenges with Studying Linguistic Expressions

Some obvious challenges for the study through language need to be recognised. The first challenge is about the reliability of the linguistic expressions. This is similar to the problems related to observing worldviews in behaviour. How can we be sure that the verbally expressed worldview represents the actual worldview, and not temporary moods or social desirability? The problem of temporality is solved by recognising that the worldview expressions take place on the level of personal perspective. Claims are not being made that the perspective captured during the investigation be representative of the perspectives two years earlier and later. There are two responses to the challenge regarding social desirability. The first one is to make sure that the set-up in the investigation rules out elements of wanting to impress others, or leaving something out out of fear of ridicule. It is nonetheless possible that the research context influences the respondent in the opposite way, inspiring the participant to speak on behalf of her affiliation/s, producing sharper and more pronounced statements than she would otherwise do. It seems that we can never be quite sure to which extent the expressed worldview equals the internal worldview. Even so, if moods or social expectations would affect the responses, the responses would still tell us something about the worldview, since worldview both influences how one understands and relates to social expectations, and affects our moods.[258]

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[256] Kierkegaard (Naugle 2002: 76-77); Nilsson 2007: 37; Helve 1997:141-142

[257] Taira 2012a: 388-402

[258] Nilsson 2007: 37-38

The second challenge is related to the possibilities of conceptualisation. Few people are able to classify or elaborately explicate their worldview.[259] This problem is partially addressed by focusing the investigation on the existential function of the worldview, which is easier to describe linguistically. It is also not unreasonable to assume that the respondents' choice to affiliate has involved active thinking in taking a stance against the perceived worldview norm/s in Finland. The respondents may therefore have a better than average capacity for theoretical and deliberate worldview elaboration. Another and more important response lies in the observation that even something that is presently unconscious can be brought to awareness upon contemplation. This effect can be enhanced by letting the respondents engage with worldview statements. It may be difficult to elaborate one's views in a systematic fashion, but it is considerably easier to agree, disagree, or partially dis/agree when confronted with a statement related to one's worldview.[260] By defining the worldview as a system of assigning meanings, the focus is on those aspects that can be brought to conscious awareness, either by direct elaboration, or by confrontation with statements.

4.2 Methods of Assessing Linguistic Worldview Expressions

Since it is easier to intuitively respond to statements that express aspects of a worldview than to produce such statements by an independent process of creative elaboration, a methodology that uses confrontation with statements is likely to be more effective than an approach where such confrontation is not used. There are several ways by which this could be achieved. In an interview, a respondent can be asked to comment on a worldview statement: "Please elaborate on/What do you think about/What comes to your mind when you hear x", where x points to or exemplifies some aspect of a worldview. The interview would ideally be structured to cover the areas most salient for the research question. In-depth interviews may potentially give more information than using surveys, where the response format is restricted. The downside is that in the interpretation of the interview data it is difficult to avoid being guided by preconceived notions about existing worldview types. Another challenge is that in-depth interviews are time-consuming. Such interviews, therefore, work best with just a few informants. In non-religious studies, this might be a good way to chart the worldviews of people with a strong public profile: Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, or in Finland, Kari Enqvist and Esko Valtaoja.

Another possibility is the traditional survey, where instead of verbal elaboration, a likert scale is used to investigate the agree-disagree-profiles along the various worldview dimensions. Here interpretation becomes a much more straightforward matter. The assessment is done by factor analysis of the collected data, and the results reveal how items covary. The results are applicable for the whole group, and generalisations can be attempted with statistical methods. From the perspective of accessing personal worldviews there are some problems. The factor analysis does not reveal the re-

[259] Helve 1997:141-142

[260] Nilsson 2007: 37-38

lative importance of the factors for the individual respondent. Also, the analyses tend to focus on covariation among statements rather than persons, leaving the complete worldview of a person out of the picture. If our interest is in the whole worldview of a person, this is obviously a problem.

Worldview-measurement with survey-based scales has been dominated by different measurements of religiosity. In the psychology of religion, attempts for empirical validation of the theoretical constructs have a long history. Cutting and Walsh found 177 scales in psychology of religion, published prior to December of 2007.[261] Most of the scales, however, have an American Protestant orientation, leaving other, particularly non-Christian, secular and alternative spiritual worldviews outside the scope of the scales. Besides that, most scales have not been able to develop sustained research programs using standardised methods in order to assess the reliability of the scales. Some scales, however, have been subject to validation by extensive research. I will overview the most well-known ones.

4.2.1 Scales Measuring Religious Orientation

The Allport-Ross Religious Orientation Scale (ROS) was initially designed to distinguish between mature and immature religious orientation. In Allport's early formulation, mature religiosity was characterised by the ability to have critical and complex reflection on religious issues - a master-motive providing direction in life, accompanied by flexibility and responsiveness to new information.[262] Such a faith would be the individual's working hypothesis, doubting which might be at least theoretically possible. The mature mind would be able to "act whole-heartedly *even without absolute certainty*" and be "*sure without being cocksure.*"[263]

In order to empirically assess the maturity of the individual religious orientation, a scale for such assessment was developed by Allport and his students. In the process of developing the measuring instrument, both the terminology and some of the original conceptions about the ways of being religious changed. In Allport's later formulation, the differentiation between mature and immature types of religiosity had transformed into the bipolar opposition between extrinsic and intrinsic types of religiosity. "The extrinsically motivated individual *uses* his religion, whereas the intrinsically motivated *lives* his."[264] The questionnaire devised for assessing these orientations consisted of 11 items measuring extrinsic and nine measuring intrinsic religiosity. Whereas the items assessing extrinsic orientation seem to fulfil their function, i.e. orientation where the religiosity has a secondary function serving some other primary motivation, the items assessing the intrinsic dimension have

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[261] Cutting and Walsh 2008

[262] Batson, Schoenrade and Ventis 1993:160

[263] Allport 1950: 72, italics added

[264] Allport and Ross 1967: 434

been criticised for not measuring only one type of orientation - unlike the scale claims. Rather, the items could characterise a fundamental type of religiosity instead of the mature one that was originally intended.[265] Besides the vagueness of the intrinsic-scale, there is another significant problem associated with the idea of the extrinsic and intrinsic orientations forming a continuum, where any individual will neatly fit in at some point between the opposite poles. Allport and Ross found out that unlike in the theory, there is little or no correlation between the extrinsic and intrinsic scales: same person could score highly on both, and the extrinsic-intrinsic scale as a whole seems to measure two or more mutually independent dimensions, with little mutual correlation.[266] To fix these shortcomings, Spilka and Allen created another scale measuring a persons approach towards religiosity in terms of being either committed or consensual. Several studies during the 1970's, however, seemed to confirm the similarities between the two systems of measurement. In its final formulations, the new scale suffered from the same problem as the earlier Allport-Ross scale: The committed-scale seemed most of all to measure an intense devotion to orthodox religious beliefs.[267]

To address the issue, Daniel Batson and colleagues introduced a third orientation type. There were aspects originally included in Allport's formulation of mature religiosity that were left out in the process of creating the questionnaires. Batson felt that these aspects indicated a third orientation type independent of the intrinsic and extrinsic orientations: that of religious Quest. Batson distinguished three distinct properties characteristic to Quest: 1) Readiness to face existential questions without reducing their complexity; 2) self-criticism and perception of religious doubts as positive and 3) openness to change. In Batson's own formulation, the Quest orientation scale is meant to measure "an open-ended, active approach to existential questions that resist clearcut, pat answers."[268] The early version of the Quest scale turned out to be unreliable an efforts of improving it were made over the years. Nevertheless, doubts about the Quest's validity have persisted, and despite Batson's addressing the issue, continues to be debated. A critique concerning the heterogenity and multidimensionality of the Quest scale has been raised,[269] and it seems that different types of Quest-orientations can be discerned.[270]

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[265] Kahoe 1974; Batson, Schoenrade and Ventis 1993:163

[266] Batson, Schoenrade and Ventis 1993: 164

[267] Batson, Schoenrade, Ventis 1993: 164-166

[268] Batson and Schoenrade 1991: 430

[269] See Beck, Baker, Robbins, and Dow 2001; Beck and Jessup 2004

[270] The "hard" and the "soft" Quests. The former is characterised by frequent changes in religious views, seeing the world religions as equally viable avenues for pursuing truth, being philosophical and existential in orientation and, struggling with existential emotions of isolation and anxiety. The "hard" Quest captures Batson's descriptions of a "free-roaming existential quest" but may also describe uncertain, conflicted, even confused metaphysical stance, leading a person either toward or away from traditional religious beliefs, and not necessarily having a distinct ending. In contrast to this, the other, "soft" type of Quest includes attributes such as openness, doubt, and growth. What clearly separates this type from the former is that it moves within a limited (but large) territory. The "soft" Quest allows commitment to a certain religious worldview yet at the same time incorporate the dynamics inherent in Quest. See Beck-Jessup 2004. This is not all. More sub-dimensions have been proposed. See Edwards and Hall 2011.

Furthermore, even though Quest was originally intended as a third orientation distinct from extrinsic and intrinsic orientations, there is some indication that some of the sub-types of Quest correlate with the extrinsic orientation, and at least one with the intrinsic orientation. Thus the multidimensionality of Quest and the ambivalence of some of the items in terms of what they are indicating are clear problems that the Quest scale if facing.[271]

4.2.2 Conclusions about Religious-orientation Scales

After the overview on these well-known, widely studied and used methods of assessing individual religiosity, general observations about how the scale may produce but also confuse the phenomenon is in place. A scale consisting of only a few response options restricts the possibilities for individual expression. It thus tends to reduce at least some of the complexity of the individual worldview to fit the scale, where the wordings designed to assess religiosity, not its absence, make such scales largely unusable for non-religious respondents. Another concern is related to the scales as a whole. Whereas the above mentioned scales arose from the desire to distinguish mature from immature religiosity, in the light of the studies done so far their capacity of assessing what they were intended to seems unclear. Extrinsic and intrinsic scales should correlate negatively with each other, but they do not; Quest is supposed to measure an independent dimension, but it correlates to some extent with both others. And at least both intrinsic and Quest scales consist of sub-scales which measure independent and different dimensions under one heading, which is misleading. Further, the sub-dimensions - which were not supposed to exist at all - turn out to correlate with other scales. All of this reflects the fact that individual subjectivity is highly complex, with the tendency to escape the researchers' attempts to categorise and put everything neatly in place.

Another and for the present purposes more pressing problem is that the above mentioned and many similar scales are primarily designed for religious respondents. There are so far no known sustained, long-term research programs assessing instruments that would be more suitable for non-religious individuals. The situation may change, however, as non-religious studies become more established. Cragun, Hammer and Nielsen have designed the non-religious-nonspiritual-scale for this purpose.[272] Schnell and Keenan have assessed meaning-making amongst self-declared atheists in Germany.[273] These two projects represent different kinds approaches for assessment: the first one assesses the respondent's level of non-religiosity/spirituality, and can be used both for general and non-religious populations, whereas the latter chooses an atheist population, and uses general measures of assessment.

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[271] Beck and Jessup 2004: 283-294

[272] Cragun, Hammer and Nielsen 2015

[273] Schnell and Keenan 2011

Rather than considering the usage of existing scales or designing new ones, I would like to consider another methodological alternative, that both incorporates the element of confronting the respondent with worldview statements, and at the same time keeps the attention on the whole worldview rather than its individual parts. In Q-method the respondent is confronted with statements in a fashion markedly different from surveys. Instead of rating disparate statements measuring different dimensions, the respondents will be engaged with the whole discourse of statements, by comparing them with one another. The emerging configuration will be representative of a worldview pattern, giving attention to not just departmental instantiations by statement, but inter-departmental structures by person. This approach is likely to evade some of the problems related to surveys, particularly if the list of worldview items includes options salient for non-religious respondents. Q-method can also be accompanied with an interview done during or after the sorting. This will provide additional information that can further contribute to getting a more complete picture of the respondent's viewpoint.

4.2.3 Q-method: Giving Voice to Subjective Viewpoints

Q-method was designed in response to the above mentioned critical observations about surveys. How would it be possible to *both* let informants define their subjective preferences from an internal frame of reference, rather than from preconceived theoretical notions about existing options, *and* utilise in the interpretation the impartiality of the quantitative analyses? William Stephenson designed Q-methodology for both accessing and assessing subjective viewpoints.[274] His point of departure was in the observation that R-methodological factor analyses, despite revealing patterns of covariation between items, do not reveal patterns that are salient for each individual. The solution was to change the procedure of R-methodology from seeking covariation between items to covariation between individuals.[275]

Instead of operationalising preconceived worldview categories into items that can be used to verify or falsify the theory, Q-methodology assesses operant subjectivity. This means that the whole viewpoint is considered based on its internal structure, as it is behaviourally expressed. The observable behaviour is, however, constrained by the design of the technique. What is observed is the respondent's engagement with a set of worldview items, the Q-set.

This kind of approach is suitable for assessing anything where no obvious right or wrong answer exists. Subjective realms consisting of preferences, experiences, tastes, values and beliefs are the appropriate domains for Q-technique. The method has mostly been used in psychology, but lends itself well to any field of inquiry dealing with subjectivity. Hence, this technique has been employed

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274 Watts and Stenner 2012: 30

275 Q-methodology has been called reversed R, even though this is somewhat misleading. Some researchers still use Q-methodology to categorise respondents into preconceived categories; this kind of approach can be appropriately called R methodological use of Q-methodology.

in inquiries as diverse as marketing research, political opinions, and how hearing-impaired children perceive their adult helpers in educational settings.[276] Due to the subjective nature of worldviews, indicated by the word 'view' as in *viewpoint, in my view* etc., they are an appropriate object for Q-methodological investigation.

4.2.4 Q-methodological Research on Worldviews

Q-methodology is relatively new in worldview and religious studies. To my knowledge it has not been previously employed for assessing non-religious viewpoints. Those studies that have been done to assess worldviews, however, point to the method's utility for revealing patterns from the respondents' internal frame of reference, even when they contradict the theoretical presuppositions. A good example is Dan B.Thomas (1976), who used Q-methodology for testing Tomkins'[277] theory of personal ideology, and found that the emerging factors were orthogonal rather than opposite, as the theory would have predicted.[278] Later on Artur Nilsson has used Q-method to explore different kinds of worldviews, combining these with a survey to assess Tomkins' theory. Nilsson found four main worldview prototypes named *optimistic anti-materialism, pessimistic anti-materialism, authentic realism* and *inauthentic realism*. These, in turn, correlated in different ways with various self-descriptions, and led to a reconceptualisation of Tomkins' theory of humanism and normativism.[279] In Finland Q-method has been used in two MA theses. Johan Terho assessed the worldviews of members in Luther-foundation, a conservative Christian organisation, and discovered four world-view prototypes: Self confidently religious, Emotional seeker, Brought up in Faith, and Affective seeker.[280] Felix Pennanen applied Q-method in a mixed-methods study focusing on the worldviews and values of followers of LCHF-diet. He found three worldview types that he named Progressive Secular Humanist, Extrinsic Religious and Irreligious Spiritualist. Even though Pennanen chose his respondents based on dietary rather than non/religious preferences, the prototype names indicate that the viewpoints found in his study are not restricted to dietary considerations.

Even though none of the above mentioned studies focus specifically on non-religion, the results point to Q-method's relevance when a nuanced understanding on worldviews is desirable. This is the case in the present study, where one of the underlying presuppositions is that non-religious experience may be of various kinds. I will now turn to the instrument used in the present study that is particularly designed for assessing varieties of subjective preferences within the worldview domain.

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[276] Gabor 2013; Brown 1980; Watts and Stenner 2012: 6

[277] Tomkins 1963: 388-411

[278] Nilsson 2013: 98

[279] Nilsson 2007; see also Nilsson 2013

[280] Terho 2013

4.3 Introducing Faith Q-sort

All studies using Q-methodology follow the same pattern. The set of statements to be used is determined. The respondents engage in the Q-sorting - placing the statements, often written on cards - on a sorting board. The sorting board consists of columns that form a continuum, where one end represents most agreement and the other end least agreement. Even though the columns can be signaled by numbers, such as -5 to +5, to indicate their relative position on the continuum, the placement of statements on the board differs from giving scores on items in a survey. Rather than scored, the items are compared to all other items. Despite the fact that the columns may be signified with numbers for the sake of clarity, the centrality of the item to one's worldview becomes the determining factor, not some predetermined absolute scale. When several people have completed the sorting and the data are collected, the next step is to analyse the results. The sorts are factor analysed. These factor analyses reveal any shared viewpoints, orientations or modes of engagement with the instrument. An additional feature, which is not included in all Q-studies, is a concomitant interview where the respondent can either during or after (or both) elaborate freely on her preferences, as they are given shape by the Q-sort. This option is used in the present study. Interviews can aid and support the factor interpretation, but interviews can also yield additional information which may not be directly addressed by the items. The end result consists of empirically assessed shared subjectivities, or worldview prototypes, that are salient for the non-religious participants in this study.

The particular instrument used in the present study is called Faith Q-sort, or FQS. 'F' in FQS stands for Faith, indicating that a worldview includes a person's inner world, and not only the 'world' out there. The word faith has a religious tone, and its Finnish (usko) and Swedish (tro) translations likewise evoke religious connotations. When the Finnish and Swedish words are translated back into English, a possible back-translation for these words could be 'belief'. Belief, however, does not necessarily imply a commitment in the way faith does: I may believe that rainforests are being destroyed at an alarming rate, but that does not mean that I am committed to advancing it. Translation issues aside, the word is problematic in the present investigation which is about the opposite of religious faith. Faith without qualifiers has a religious primary connotation. That is the main reason why I have chosen to talk about non-religious worldviews rather than faiths.

The inner dimension has been a prominent theme ever since Kant introduced the term Weltanschauung. I will elaborate on the content of the statements used in FQS later, but it is important from the outset to know that many of the statements in FQS deal directly with metaphysics, using words such as transcendence, divine, ultimate, God, spiritual and religious. Since the goal is to assess modes of non-religion, it is important to present the respondents with various options that address not only one but several aspects of seeking meaning in broadly religious terms. This means that along with expressions of traditional religion, Eastern traditions and alternative spiritualities should be included. When the range of options is broad, it is more likely that the assessment can capture both various objects and nuances of differentiation.

An instrument that only engages the respondents with statements that reflect religious engagement would, however, be too narrow. Even though I have argued that non-religion is defined in relation to religion by differentiation, it is important that the respondents have options that are expressed in positive terms. In the background of FQS there is the perception that previous instruments were mostly Christian in tone, making the instruments irrelevant for respondents from other faith-traditions, particularly the non-religious or secular ones. Thus, FQS was developed to "solve the century-long problem of how to assess individual religious outlook, or faith, for the purposes of conducting empirical research," but also for giving options for those without a religion.[281]

There are four principal reasons why I consider this instrument suitable for the present study:

1) Since the instrument utilises the experiences from previous instruments in its design, many of the statements directly address religious or spiritual engagement. Hence, a non-religious respondent gets opportunities for not only disagreeing or differentiating from these viewpoints, but also gets an opportunity to rank-order such perspectives according to personal preferences.
2) FQS includes options that are positively salient for non-religious viewpoints.
3) There are many statements that are non/religiously neutral, assessing underlying moods or social proclivities. Such statements can allow for detecting modes of being non/religious that may be independent on the substantial content on one's beliefs.
4) The instrument is designed for a general rather than a specifically non-religious worldview domain. Hence, results can be compared with other FQS-studies. Non-religion worldview prototypes, as they emerge from this study, can be placed on a larger map of worldview prototypes.

I will discuss the heuristic value of the instrument in the concluding section of this thesis, based on experiences from the present study. Now I will address the design of the instrument.

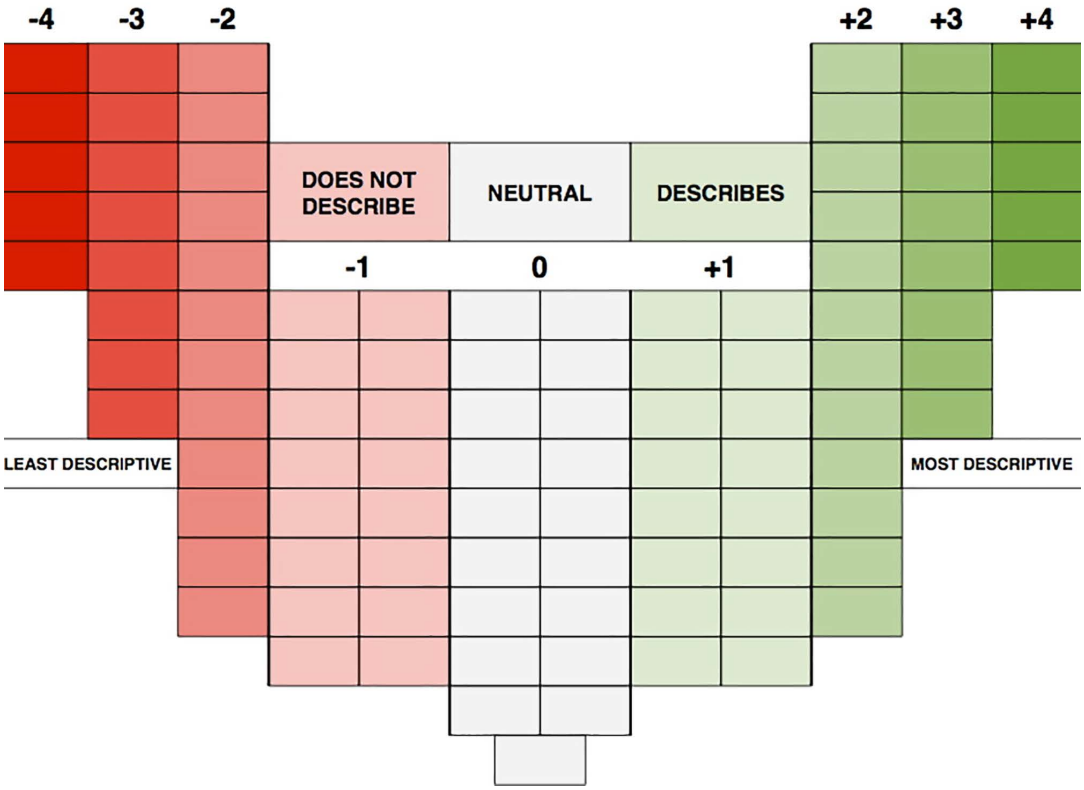
4.3.1 Design

Typically, any Q-sort consists of a stack of cards and a board with columns, usually ranging from values assigned to each column between -5 and +5 or -4 to +4. Each column has space for a certain number of statement cards, and the array of columns usually resembles a roughly normal distribution. Largest space is reserved for the middle section (values -1, 0 and +1), having little or no relevance for the respondent, or being experienced as ambiguous. There is relatively less space for the statements at the positive and negative ends. These columns are for the statements that are most important for the final analysis, indicating either strong agreement or disagreement.

The respondents sort the statements into the specific sections on the board according to personal preferences. In FQS, the five most agreeable statements are moved into the column with the highest (+4) value; then the eight next most agreeable are moved into the column with next highest value

[281] Wulff 2009

(+3) and so on. Likewise, the respondent needs to find the five statements that are most disagreeable and place them on the leftmost column, and then place the eight next most disagreeable in the next column and so on. This goes on until all the places on the board are filled with a statement. Then, the respondent must take a final look and see if the internal ordering of the items reflects her preferences. If not, changes can be made until one is satisfied with the final configuration.



3. Viewpoint space in FQS

The form of the distribution may vary from one Q-study to another. If normal distribution is followed, the steepness or flatness can be determined based on the expected interest or engagement of the respondents.[282] In some studies, respondents are allowed to choose the number of statements placed in the columns according to preference. There are advantages and disadvantages to the various solutions.The free or partially free distribution will allow the respondent to determine their viewpoint completely self-referentially. The benefit of this is that the researcher will be better able to determine the psychologically neutral middle-section of the distribution, whereas in forced format, that cannot be known for sure. This has implications for the interpretation of the arising worldview prototypes. An example of this is when a statement is placed in a column indicating agreement, yet the subjective neutral point is on the right side of that column. The downside of a free dis-

[282] van Exel and de Graaf 2005: 6-7

tribution is that the forced distribution encourages more introspection, since a careful comparison between statements becomes a necessity. In some cases, of course, such fine-tuning can exceed the respondent's cognitive capacities, but the end result is still likely to sufficiently approximate the personal viewpoint. After all, the analysis which seeks shared patterns is less sensitive to whether one item is placed in this or the neighbouring column, whereas placing the statement in the opposite end of the distribution will make a bigger difference in the factor analysis. Clusters of items that are lumped more or less similarly will be relatively stable in face of small ambiguity of placement. Besides, in reality the comparisons require that the participant focus on those items that are placed in the neighbouring columns, since the differences in preferences become much more obvious as the distance between the columns increases.

According to Brown,[283] concerns about the distribution form affecting the emerging factors are unwarranted, as long as the internal ordering of the items by the respondent remains the same. This means that if the respondent just follows her own internal frame of preferences in placing the items in the order from 1 to N on the sorting surface, the distribution form will have minimal to no effect on the factors. FQS uses a forced, relatively steep normal distribution. Due to an unusually large number of statements in the Q-set (N = 101), there will be both room for placing many statements in the middle, and still finding a sufficient number of statements that evoke strong opinions of dis/agreement to account for variation.

4.3.2 Domain

The domain of the particular discourse needs to be specified. In Q-methodological terms, the term *concourse* stands for all the viewpoints of a particular discourse. The theoretical assumption behind Q-methodology is that only a limited number of distinct viewpoints exist on any topic.[284]If the Q-sample is comprehensive and well-structured, it should reveal these perspectives. A verbal concourse may be derived from various sources: interviews, participant observation, popular literature and scientific literature. The material consists of existing opinions and arguments that lay people, organisations and researchers have to say about the topic.[285] Since the size of the concourse usually vastly exceeds what is realistic to include in the sort, the researcher needs to formulate a representative sample of statements that is used in the sort - the Q-set.

If worldview is understood as a parent category for all religious and non-religious outlooks, the number of possible and relevant statements becomes huge. In practice, therefore, the domain needs to be constrained to focus on specific aspects of worldview. I have argued for the importance to pre-

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[283] Brown 1980: 288-289. Brown compares both skewed, steep, flat and even inverted distributions and concludes: "...distribution effects are virtually nil, the existence of factors being affected almost entirely by the patterns of item placement"

[284] Brown 1980: 84-85

[285] van Exel and de Graaf 2005: 3-5

sent the respondents with statements of both a distinctly religious flavour of different kinds, as well as secular options. I believe FQS fulfils these criteria well. I will now elaborate on the background of the Q-set of statements used in FQS.

The 101 statements cover the worldview domain by addressing central tenets of major religious traditions, theoretical perspectives from the psychology of religion, attitudes towards religious texts, different representations of God, classic case studies and personal narratives, worldview pluralism, underlying cognitive dispositions and options for those holding non-religious worldviews. The statements are expressed in general terms so that the substance of the various worldviews does not become a distinguishing factor. To exemplify, instead of naming Jesus or Buddha, item #66 reads: "Deeply identifies with some holy figure, either human or divine." In the analysis, then, the underlying disposition of identifying with a role model with a sacred status becomes the defining factor, not the name of the object of identification, or the particular religious/secular tradition. Likewise, even though some of the statements are based on earlier instruments with Christian overtones, the wordings have been moderated to be relevant for people from many different backgrounds and orientations.

I will present the major topics addressed by the statements, followed by examples of each. All FQS statements are included in Appendix A.

According to David Wulff, FQS accommodates statements

1. to represent core aspects of each of the major religious traditions, but worded in such a way that they could also be meaningful to persons of other traditions or none at all [for example]:

    a. Evangelical Christian: being born-again; being close to Jesus

        #37. Has experienced a sudden change in or intensification of religious understanding or commitment.

    b. Islam: The Five Pillars (Shahada, prayers, alms, *Hajj,* fasting)

        #67. Observes with great care prescribed religious practices and prohibitions.

    c. Buddhism: the universal as lying within

        #44. Senses a transcendent or universal luminous element within him- or herself.

2. to incorporate fundamental understandings and distinctions proposed by classic contributors to the psychology of religion:

    a. healthy-minded vs. the sick soul (William James)

#34. Sees this world as a place of suffering and tears.

b. the challenge of theodicy, the problem of evil if one posits a loving god (Eduard Spranger)

#85. Finds belief in a benevolent god difficult in the face of evil.

c. intrinsic and extrinsic orientations (Gordon Allport)

intrinsic:

#16. *Being religious or spiritual is at the core of his or her identity.*

#31. *Thinks frequently and deeply about religious or spiritual questions.*

extrinsic:

#7. Participates in religious practices chiefly to satisfy others' wishes or expecta tions.

#21. *Attends religious services to form or maintain friendships or business associations.*

d. quest orientation (Daniel Batson)

#13. *Conceives of religious faith as a never-ending quest.*

#64. *Centers his or her life on a religious or a spiritual quest.*

3. to offer a range of attitudes toward religious scriptures, from the doctrine of inerrancy to total rejection;

#15. *Considers the meaning of religious scriptures to be clear and unambiguous.*

#32. *Considers all religious scriptures to be outdated or misguided, hence largely worthless today.*

4. to give voice to both positive and negative God representations and to varying degrees of closeness to God;

#41. *Thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent.*

#45. *Feels angry at or distant from God or the divine.*

5. To accommodate persons in classic case studies, religious biographies, and internet narratives;

   #58. *Has a religious outlook much like one or both parents.*

6. to address the problem of today's growing religious pluralism and thus attitudes toward and responses to traditions other than one's own;

   #81. *Has felt positively engaged by the symbols of other persons' religious tradi tions.*

7. to assess underlying cognitive dispositions, including the need for clarity;

   #8. *Longs for a deeper, more confident faith.*

8. to offer sufficient options for those who are irreligious or even hostile to religion;

   #60. *Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires.*
   #95. *Affirms the possibility of human progress—e.g., the attainment of peace—on a worldwide scale.*

9. to recognise that worldviews are expressed in diverse ways, none of which is likely universal.[286]

4.3.3 Administering the FQS

Since the aim of Q-methodology is to find existing viewpoints rather than making generalisations to populations, FQS does not require a large number of respondents. The aim is at a structured participant group, representing the major viewpoints within the domain. The strategy of finding the participants in the present study was non-random. An effort for arriving at a variety of viewpoints was made by contacting and extending the invitations to the major organisations, augmented by snowball-technique.

Once the group of respondents is there, FQS needs to be administered to the respondents. In this study the participation consisted of two steps. The first step was through the internet or by ordinary

[286] Wulff 2012

mail. This step gathered much of the basic demographic information about the respondents. Information about language is based on the chosen language for engaging with the instrument and interview. Information about places of residence - living in a town with a population over or under 100,000 - was not asked in the survey, but the data is available and presented in the section about demographics. It is derived either from information received in an informal talk during the meeting, or when I first contacted the persons who showed interest by providing their contact information. One of my basic questions regarded place of residence in order to be able to plan the interviews efficiently based on location. There were cases where I had asked about the place of residence after the personal meeting, either by phone or by email. In one case I was unable to obtain the place of residence of the respondent.

The second step consisted of a personal meeting with the respondent, including sorting the FQS items and an interview, all with a guarantee of keeping the respondent's identity confidential. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed, with the respondents' permission. The meeting with the respondent had a standard structure. First, the respondent was given a statement about agreement for participation. The statement of agreement contained an explanation about the research project, and a statement to the effect that the respondent understands the purpose of the study. Permission was asked for using the information derived from the meeting for the purpose of the research project, and for archiving the results. All respondents accepted the recording of the interview, which was extremely helpful as it enabled turning the attention solely to the interview. The engagement with the FQS took from 25 to a little over 90 minutes. Fortunately, I had conducted a pilot study and was therefore prepared for 2-hour long meetings.

Preliminary sorting: Administering the FQS was accompanied by a procedure that is not obligatory in Q-sorts, but can be used to receive additional information. Since a forced distribution, which is used in FQS, will not reveal the psychological middle ground of the respondent, an additional pre-sorting was done. The respondents were asked to begin by placing all cards in three piles, without restrictions: Pile one indicating agreement with the statement, pile two for neutrality, and pile three for disagreement. After placing all cards in one of the three piles, the piles were counted. It would have been theoretically possible for a respondent to place all items to any of the three piles. Comparing the sizes of the piles would enable guessing the actual middle ground: If pile one would be significantly larger than pile three, that would mean that in the actual distribution the point indicating neutrality would be shifted towards the left side of the board, whereas right side indicates agreement or personally felt salience. Conversely, if pile three would be larger, the middle ground would shift to the right. If piles one and three would have approximately the same amount of cards, the middle ground would probably be where it is on the board, in the middle column.[287]

[287] It is more appropriate to speak about guessing, since in the sorting no constraints were placed for moving the cards around after the initial sorting into three piles. In principle, then, it would be possible to begin the procedure from scratch after the initial sorting.

Actual Sorting: After the initial sorting of three piles, the respondent would next be asked to go through the items in pile one (most agree-pile), and place those five statements that are most descriptive of her worldview to the rightmost column on the sorting surface. After that, the same procedure would be repeated with the remaining statements for the next rightmost column, which has place for eight cards. Subsequently, the next column with 12 places is filled, until the pile is finished. The same procedure is then repeated with pile three, with the cards least agreeable to the respondent. The leftmost column has five places, and the five least agreeable cards from pile three are placed there, then the eight cards from the remaining pile are placed to the next leftmost column and so on. Finally, the cards in pile two are placed in the remaining places on the board. During and after the sorting, the respondent could at any time change the positions of the cards. This reflects the dynamic nature of the procedure, where the respondent is supposed to continuously reflect on the interrelations of the statements, so that the final pattern is a result of comparing all cards to all other cards. After the sorting is completed, the respondent is asked to take a final look at the whole configuration and make any final changes according to preference.

The completed FQS-sort would then be documented by inserting the numbered statements in their respective places in a Numbers-application for Mac designed by Mika Lassander. The application has the feature of immediately informing if the coded statements are not entered correctly.[288] The initial three piles with their respective amounts were recorded as well.

Interviews: An interview can be conducted after the sorting to derive additional information. In the present study, some respondents started commenting on the items already during the sorting procedure. Most waited until they had completed the sorting. The comments were recorded and later transcribed. The interviews were semi-structured. Respondents were encouraged to reflect on the statements that evoked the strongest opinions. Why did these particular items end up in right- and left-most columns with values -4 to -2 and +2 to +4? Other than that, any comments that would be salient for one's worldview would be welcomed, including personal worldview narratives, and topics that might be missing amongst the FQS items. The respondents were also asked to give feedback about the instrument, and ideas for improving the instrument.

The interviews were later analysed and interpreted. In relation to FQS the interviews have two primary roles. The first one is to add to the understanding received by the factor analysis. What do the particular statements mean to the respondents? The self-referential nature of Q-methodological assessment recognises that the respondents are likely to interpret the statements in their personal ways. Interview gives an additional facility for personal elaboration. The other potentially beneficial feature of the interview is the possibility of going beyond the items, by adding things not included in the Q-set. These kinds of information can be helpful in factor interpretation, where the additional hints can be used to understand the worldview prototype underlying the factor array.

[288] If a number is entered several times, or one or more numbers are missing.

The interview analysis took place in two stages. In the first stage, I went through all interviews by topic to gain an understanding of the respondents as a group. In the second stage, I focused the investigation on the respondents who defined only one of the emerging non-religious worldview prototypes. I utilised both qualitative and quantitive approaches. In the first stage, the approach was more qualitative. I attempted to identify major themes under each topic. Even in this stage, I had to consider the numbers of instantiations a theme would emerge. Without attempting to arrive at a statistical description, I would nevertheless focus on those themes that surfaced repeatedly. In the second stage, I wanted to see whether the prototypes would differ from each other. I have presented the results both verbally and in tables to help the reader to get an easy grasp of the big picture. It should be kept in mind, that since only one topic - the affiliations - was investigated systematically, the emerging results don't claim statistical validity. They do, however, reveal some interesting and consistent patterns. At the second stage I augmented my first list of topics with some additional topics that I became curious about after the Q-analysis. I investigated even one topic that was hinted at by the Q-interpretation, and which is of interest from the general worldview theoretical point of view: the relationship to the nature, or non-human world. The best way I can call the whole procedure is a kind of hermeneutical circle, where repeated engagement with the same set of interviews produced an increasingly deeper understanding. Where the present investigation differs from a similar study of a religious text, the worldview content aside, is the utilization of the FQS for providing hints and guiding the interpretation. After all, interviews in the present context are meant to aid a better understanding of the Q-analysis, not the other way round.

The interviews were conducted in different locations in Finland: Porvoo, Helsinki, Espoo, Lohja, Järvenpää, Riihimäki, Karkkila, Forssa, Turku, Raisio, Oulu and Tampere. Since I live in Sweden, one interview was conducted conveniently in Stockholm during a holiday trip of one respondent. It is in place to mention - with gratitude - that the respondents were very flexible regarding the appointments and places, which made the work smooth and pleasant. The transcribed interviews are coded to guarantee respondent anonymity and preserved in Cultura, Åbo Akademi archive of Folkloristics. It will not be possible to connect the answers to the personal information of the respondents.

4.3.4 Analysis

The analysed data yields a lot of information about the respondents, regarding both common and specific variance. The factor analysis in Q-methodology does not differ from other methodologies. It aims at accounting for as much of the study's variance as possible by identifying any significant shared meanings present in the data. The factors that are identified are called *prototypes* in the context of FQS. The two main methods that can be used in Q-studies are centroid factor analysis (CFA) and principal component analysis (PCA).[289] In centroid factor analysis there is no mathematically

[289] Technically speaking, the components of principal component analysis are not factors

superior solution; in the lack of such a determinant, the hunches of the researcher become the obvious guiding principle. Such exploration is suited not only for confirmatory research. It may also be favoured if the researcher wants to explore the data with the logic of abduction.[290] On the other hand, the investigation may aim at impartiality regarding expectations about emerging patterns of subjectivity. Stephenson claimed that Q-methodology allows the analysis to proceed without any conceptions external to the meanings the respondents assign to the items. Even though some assumptions seem necessary for there to be any interpretation at all,[291] the guiding principle in the analysis can still be an attempt to remain agnostic about the outcomes, for which reason the use of PCA is defensible. I have used PCA in the present study, and refrained from manual rotations for refining the findings. PCA is also defensible for the sake of consistency with both the method used by Professor Wulff in his initial FQS investigations, and the other analyses conducted with other participant groups in the larger research project, Viewpoints to the World.

To illustrate what goes on in the analyses I use an example of a huge pizza-bread on top of which the respondents get to throw ingredients according to their personal preferences, without knowing what the others are adding. After everyone has finished throwing in their favourites, it is time to analyse the space of relevant ingredient combinations. Perhaps there is major consensus that tomatoes need to be included, and a minor consensus about inclusion of cheese - with the exceptions of lactose intolerants and animal rights activists. The cheese-issue already somewhat divides the participants. More subcategories focused on variation can be discerned, such as oregano versus basilica, or whether bananas or pineapple should be favoured, or both, or no fruits at all. The quantity and quality of olive oil may also be an issue, and so on. The task of the investigator - who does not have to like the ingredients - is to find out commonalities between the participants' choices of ingredients. These commonalities are the equivalents of the worldview prototypes. They are typical preferred combinations of ingredients, viewpoints that can be described as family-resemblances.

The question will be: In how many ways can we meaningfully deconstruct the pizza, so that major shared preferences emerge? Theoretically, there are unlimited possibilities, but for practical purposes it would not make sense to analytically distinguish a combination of ingredients that is nowhere close to what the respondents actually preferred. Let us exemplify: It would be possible to separate a combination of garlic and banana, but if in actuality none of the respondents preferred this combination, it would not reflect much the tastes of real people. At best we could arrive at descriptions such as "respondents A, C, and X are 20-25% associated with the garlic-banana combination, whereas respondents D, G, F, and L are 40-65% negatively associated." In this example, A, C and X can at least relate to the proposed combination, whereas D, G, F, and L definitely dislike it.

Going to the other extreme, every respondent's particular combination of ingredients could be analysed as a separate viewpoint. This approach might not yield any shared preferences. A reasonable middle ground would be to acknowledge that despite the many differences, three or four major in-

[290] Watts and Stenner 2012: 99

[291] Nilsson 2007: 107-108

gredient viewpoints would explain most of the total variance. Continuing with the example, if such major ingredient viewpoints are sufficiently universal, we could expect to find something close to these recipes reflected in the menus of pizzerias around the globe. The goal of the data-analysis is to find shared meanings which, as family resemblances, may not correlate 100% with any respondent's personal viewpoint, but are sufficiently close to existing dispositions to enable a meaningful discussion about shared preferences.

It is theoretically possible to do the analysis by hand, yet usually, due to the sheer amount of data, computer-applications are employed. I used the free software developed and shared by Peter Schmolk - PQMethod for Mac version 220.[292] I will explicate analytic process and the solution I used when I present the results. To give a taste of how the emerging prototypes could look like, I will present the three major prototypes found by David Wulff in his pilot study in New England.

4.3.5 Examples of Emerging Results

David Wulff conducted a pilot study in the USA with 42 respondents of various backgrounds. The important difference with Wulff's study and the present one is in the group of respondents. Wulff had no particular focus, religious or otherwise. The three major prototypes, which have turned out to be relatively stable in later studies, were named as Traditionally Theistic, Spiritually Attuned and Secular-Humanistic. Besides these, five smaller prototypes named Reluctantly Sceptical, Extrinsically Religious, Situationally Religious, Institutionally Anchored and Religious-Humanistic were found.

The prototype descriptions are:

> *Traditionally Theistic:* Firmly rooted in the religious values taught in childhood, persons of this prototype feel personally protected and guided by a spiritual being, who is turned to with joy and thanksgiving and from whom is received forgiveness for earlier thoughts and deeds. Guided and sustained by familiar religious scriptures and private spiritual practices, these individuals are at the same time active, contributing members of some religious community. A fundamental core of values and a well-defined set of moral principles are embraced. Self-described as caring and compassionate, these persons express their faith by reaching out to those in need. They feel at home in the universe and a sense of peace, even in the face of life difficulties.
>
> *Spiritually Attuned:* Sensing a transcendent or universal luminous element within themselves, persons of this prototype reject religious authorities or exemplars as sources for understanding and direction. Religious faith is conceived of as a never-ending quest, the transcendent, as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never grasped. Indeed, these persons take delight in mystery and paradox, and music, art, or poetry provide sustenance. Moments of profound illumination are familiar, especially in the midst of the natural world. Following a spiritual path that above all is in harmony with the Earth, these persons are dedicated to making the world a better place to live. The full realisation of human potentialities is seen to be the goal of human life and ultimate truth is

[292] http://schmolck.userweb.mwn.de/qmethod/

thought to be reflected in symmetry, harmony, and balance. Being religious is not a prerequisite for being a deeply moral and compassionate person.

Secular Humanistic: Religion is viewed as an illusory creation of human fears and desires, its scriptures, as mythic and metaphoric, the products of human authorship rather than divine inspiration. All religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles are rejected. Whereas no higher purpose or ultimate destiny is discerned for the human species, there is nevertheless hope for human progress on a worldwide scale. Indeed, persons of this prototype actively work to relieve the suffering of others and to make the world a better place to live. A fundamental affirmation of a core of values and moral principles undergirds this perspective, according to which being religious is not a prerequisite for being deeply moral and compassionate. Music, art, or poetry, not scriptural passages or religious convictions, are important sources of sustenance.[293]

Even though the descriptions are assembled by the researcher, they arise from the actual shared preferences as sorted by the respondents, without any additional elements either from interviews, theories or other studies. The descriptions should therefore be seen as local descriptions of prototypes of the particular study, rather than universal definitions about what for instance being spiritually attuned means, or how secular humanism should be defined. They reflect only the present configurations, even though it is quite possible that the findings have broader and more global relevance. That is, however, not something that can be determined without other confirmatory studies. The names of the prototypes are approximations given by the researcher, and may reflect ideas external to the study at hand. The prototype names are meant to capture the essential features of the prototype with only a few words. Hence, it is probably necessary to add more extensive elaborations along with the prototype name. I will follow the same guidelines when I present the results of this study.

4.3.6 Limitations and Challenges with FQS

I will conclude the presentation of FQS by taking a look at its limitations and challenges. I will begin with criticisms voiced against Q-method's ability to produce results that can be generalised to larger populations. Then I will investigate more closely the particular features of FQS, focusing on its suitability for the present study.

Q-Method and Generalisations: Results from Q-methodological studies have been criticised for lacking the possibility for generalisations. Unlike R-method, however, Q-method treats respondents as variables rather than sample elements. Q-method is not concerned with which proportion of a larger population is associated with which prototype. In Steven Brown's words, "[Q-method] has more affinities with chemistry or anatomy than with geography or anything demographic."[294] For finding whether particular viewpoints exist at all, a smaller number of respondents is sufficient.

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[293] Prototype descriptions by David Wulff, documented in Terho 2013: 49-50

[294] Brown 1980: 192

What is needed is enough respondents representing a variety of viewpoints to establish the existence of a prototype, and to be able to compare this prototype with another one. The emerging results will be more like stating white tigers exist, than claiming all crows are black.

Another concern raised is about substantive generalisation: whether two Q-studies targeting similar populations with the same instrument would produce similar results. A tandem study conducted by Thomas and Baas[295] suggests such concerns may be unwarranted, but naturally it is a matter of further studies to investigate whether the prototypes found in the present study have stability amongst other, similar populations.

Forced Distribution: Since the majority of the items assess religiosity, it is necessary to consider the effect of forced distribution for respondents who are likely to feel negative salience with religiously worded items. Will this force the respondent to place items of disagreement on the positive side of the sorting board? According to Steven Brown, there is no reason to worry about the form of the distribution if the internal ordering of the items is not changed. The emerging prototypes would still look the same.[296] Then, from the pure factor analytical point of view, the distribution form is not an issue. It is an issue, however, regarding the factor interpretation. A possible scenario for a non-religious respondent is that a statement that the respondent disagrees with ends up in a column marked with a positive number, indicating agreement. A feature of the present study addresses this issue. The sorting is done in two stages. In the first stage, the respondent is to place the statements freely in three piles, where one pile is for agreeable statements, another one for disagreeable and a third one for neutral or ambivalent ones. Using this feature allows for an estimation of the subjective neutral point in the distribution. Hence, the factor interpretation can take into account the *de facto* neutral point and avoid interpreting statements as indicating dis/agreement, if that is not the case from the prototype's internal frame of reference.

Barrelled Items: A barrelled item consists of at least two independent parts which are combined in the same statement or question. To exemplify with a triple-barrelled item from the FQS, item #25 reads, "Expresses disdain or contempt for all religious institutions, ideas, and practices." What if a respondent expresses disdain towards ideas yet appreciates the social work of the institutions, or feels contempt towards institutions as tools for exercising power, yet appreciates private religious practices ? There would be agreement with one aspect of the statement and disagreement with another one. There are other items in the FQS that are technically barrelled, as they use the conjunction *and*.

It is a Q-methodological principle that the concourse from which the representative sample of items for the final Q-set is assembled, resemble as closely as possible real expressions as they are used when people express opinions and preferences on the topic. From this point of view, it looks like

[295] Thomas and Baas 1992/1993

[296] Brown 1980: 288-289

FQS aims more at general formulations than local idiosyncrasies. A real-discourse statement might be something about Jesus or Buddha, whereas FQS talks about a holy figure, human or divine. Aiming at general formulations enables the application of the instrument in a variety of different contexts. It also enables inter-worldview comparisons, whereas very specific wordings would reduce much of the instrument's applicability outside the host culture of the original concourse. It is possible to go too far to the other direction. If the statements in the Q-set become too much removed from a real-life concourse, they may end up beyond recognition, and cease to do the work they were designed to.

There is a built-in feature in the Q-methodology that addresses worries related to barrelling. The neutral middle-ground is reserved for items experienced as either neutral, or ambivalent. Since the middle section is relatively large, there should be plenty of place for placing statements that evoke ambiguity. In the interpretation one needs to be sensitive to the whole configuration, to figure out what subjective meaning a barrelled statement may have for a particular respondent, or for the worldview prototype.

Limitations of FQS for Assessing Non-religion in Finland: Majority of the 101 items are formulated in a way that make them applicable for positive expressions of religion or spirituality. It is obvious that items "to offer sufficient options for those who are irreligious or even hostile to religion" (group #8 in the list of themes presented previously) need to be included for the instrument to be meaningful for non-religious respondents. Some other items such as #85 about theodicy, #7 about participating in religious services due to social reasons, #32 about religious texts being outdated and irrelevant and #45 about feeling angry or distant from the divine can also be salient for the non-religious experience in Finland. It is also clear why items dealing with more general worldview dispositions, underlying cognitive and emotional orientations are important for assessing different modes of viewing the world.[297] Other than that, from the theoretical point of view it is motivated to include features of previously used well-known instruments. Inclusion of many such items, reflecting various aspects of religiosity, enables us to see profound rather than superficial shared patterns of differentiation from religion.

At this point it may be useful to reflect, whether an instrument where the majority of statements are positively religious in tone is the best choice for assessing non-religion. I will reflect on the experiences from this study more in Conclusions-section, yet it seems necessary to mention here this: Some respondents expressed criticisms due to experiencing the instrument as overly religious in tone, but only one respondent did not complete the sorting for this reason. Critical feedback needs to be contrasted with the fact that most respondents did not make complaints, and some visibly enjoyed the experience.[298]

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[297] Here 'view' may stand for all kinds of dispositions, not only cognitive.

[298] One respondent even recommended that the instrument is so interesting that it should be developed into a social game.

If an instrument is to assess a variety of ways how differentiation from religion can take place, it would seem that inclusion of many items that deal with different kinds of religious and spiritual expressions are a necessity. In FQS the items have to be rang-ordered relative to one another, instead of scoring isolated items on a scale. Similarities in such patterns reveal much deeper congruences, being the result of more elaboration, and reflecting comprehensive worldview gestalts. Inclusion of a sufficient variety of items addressing religion also enables perceptions of distinctions within differentiation: what kind of religiosity is rejected, what is more tolerable, or even appealing? After all, the differentiation is from *religion*, so what kind of religion is a natural question. The central features of such differentiation need to be assessed for different grades of dis/agreements by juxtaposing the statements and locating them on a continuum between polar oppositions (statements of strong agreement versus strong disagreement). In a survey format, items assessing different types of religiosity could easily be ranked with overall disagreement, without much consideration about their relative un/importance for the respondent.

Challenges with translation: The original items are in English, whereas the sorts and interviews in this study were conducted in Finnish (72 respondents) and Swedish (5 respondents). The translation of the items was done by back-translation method, with two professional translators. The translation procedure presented some challenges due to the specialised vocabulary. Professional translations needed to be double-checked by the scholars working in the project, and some wordings needed to be modified to better reflect the special nuances in Finnish and Swedish languages. A good example is translation of item #30, which reads in English: "Considers regular attendance at religious services to be an essential expression of faith." The first Swedish translation for religious services, *gudstjänster*, needed modification, since the formulation included the word *gud* - God - whereas the original wording does not. The first translation was correct according to the dictionary; yet direct reference to God in the translation would make the item problematic for practitioners of non-theistic religions such as some Western Buddhists, whereas for the respondents of the present study, the semantics of God might evoke stronger reactions of differentiation than a more neutral wording. After discussion, the Swedish wording was changed to "*religiösa sammankomster (likt gudstjänster)*." This wording uses a more neutral translation, where religious services is translated word for word. Yet this is not the official usage in Swedish, and therefore the dictionary equivalent *gudstjänster* was provided in brackets, preceded by the Swedish equivalent for *such as.*[299]

Additional to challenges in conveying the original English expressions into Finnish and Swedish, some other semantic challenges, internal to a non-religious discourse, should be mentioned. Depending on the respondent, terms such as spiritual and its derivatives, found in many FQS-items, were variously regarded as relevant, ambiguous or alien. I will discuss this in detail when I present the interviews by prototype. At this point, a potential limitation of the instrument for some non-religious respondents is that meaningful experiences in nature are addressed by an item that includes the word spiritual (#11), which may affect the sorting pattern towards less agreement. Compound

[299] For other examples, see Terho 2013: 47-48

expressions such as religious conviction, religious outlook, religious understanding and, of course, faith were used to refer to worldview in general. This was explained in the sorting instructions that suggested that such expressions be applicable to secular viewpoints as well. I enclose the sorting instructions in Appendix D. Despite instructions, this feature may be a source of problems. The respondents may be influenced by the wordings, and thus personally experience them as less relevant. Some other terms that are included in the instrument may just simply be alien to non-religious respondents, particularly those with a non-religious upbringing. Three items use the word transcendence. Fortunately, the sorting instructions include an elaboration on how the word could be understood. There are other terms, however, such as *ultimate* and *luminous element*, which may be rather far from the discourse of some non-religious respondents.

These challenges need to be contrasted with two considerations: First, the instrument is meant to be relevant for a variety of contexts which probably means it will, by necessity, contain formulations that are relevant for some and irrelevant, ambiguous or difficult for others. Second, even though some items are interpreted in ways not originally intended in the design, this may not have to be of concern. The sorting pattern will still be self-referential, thus how the respondents experience and understand the items is really always up to them.

I will conclude this discussion by returning to the worldview concourse. I have argued that the present investigation need not be concerned of such aspects of worldview that are likely to be shared by all Finns, and that are not concerned with the existential function of the worldview. We need to focus, rather, on items that are relevant for differentiation from religion. As a consequence, many worldview statements can be disregarded as irrelevant for assessing differentiation from religion. Conversely, there is both need and rationale for letting religiously flavoured statements be a significant part of the Q-set. The next question is, what kind of religiosity is relevant? It is clear that even though major religious traditions, as well as paganism and secular viewpoints, are represented, majority of the items in FQS dealing with religion are grounded in Christian discourses. This should not come as a surprise when considering American psychology of religion as a major background for FQS. Rather than viewing this as a problem, I contend this to be an asset for the task at hand: The dominant form of religion in Finland which is both the most familiar for the respondents, and which is therefore the likely point of departure for their differentiation, is Lutheran Christianity. Since the religiously flavoured statements are combined with statements which give positive voice

to non-religious viewpoints, or have no ostensibly religious referent, it is likely that a variety of non-religious viewpoints can be expressed.[300]

A few reservations are nevertheless in place. Even though the central improvement with Q-methodology compared with surveys is that the final configuration reflects self-reference more than preconceived theories, it is still a fact that the Q-set is determined by the scholar, not the respondents.[301] Real discourses as well as theoretical viewpoints and empirical research results can and should be the sources for determining the larger concourse from which the Q-set is drawn, but once the items are fixed, they delimit the scope of the assessment. The emerging configurations are still determined by forces beyond the control of the respondent, and the assessment of operant subjectivity is never an "anything goes" matter. The engagement with the statements of the Q-set could be compared to a test, where respondents are given 101 Lego-blocks of different colours, shapes and forms. The task is then to construct something out of these blocks. The possibilities of different kinds of Lego-castles and other products are endless, yet at the same time constrained by the available blocks. The respondent cannot suddenly wish to manifest her preferences by constructing a mini railway, or a game of softball. Just like lego-blocks, the Q-set limits the possibilities, yet gives so many options that it is reasonable to talk about self-referential behavioural manifestation. The benefit of FQS and other similar instruments over other behavioural expressions of worldviews is that the "blocks" consist of verbal expressions, which are the closest and most reliable approximations of the underlying worldview discourse. Whereas a Lego-house would certainly reflect the underlying worldview, it would not be clear in which way. If the Q-set is done well, it should be able to reflect and give voice to the relevant worldview preferences. My own comments at this point are that the variety and number of religious items that the respondents can differentiate from seems sufficient. Ideally, for participant groups like the present one, it might be justifiable to include more items expressing non-religious viewpoints in positive terms. Religion as an instrument for power and oppression, experiences of discrimination due to not being religious, religion as a source of guilt-feelings, and religion as a hindrance for societal or personal progress are some topics that,

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[300] It is a matter of semantics to determine how many statements either express an explicitly non-religious, even anti-religious viewpoint or are non/religiously neutral. This is because according to Wulff's sorting instructions, ""religious outlook" or "view" should be understood, in addition to the usual meanings, as potentially encompassing atheist, agnostic, indifferent, or even antagonistic views." Ultimately, it is the respondent who decides what a given item means to her, and this understanding may differ from the original intention of the scholar who assembles the Q-set. As Brown put it, "... whatever an investigator may define a statement to mean theoretically in no way necessarily enters into the subject's understanding as he scores that same statement in a *Q* sort." (Brown, 1980: 191). This is of course not to say that instructions about how understanding religious outlook in a broader way are irrelevant - on the contrary, they are necessary. I have analysed the Q-set of items used in FQS, and concluded that 38 statements could be considered to be religiously neutral or non-religious. Some formulations are clearly more ambiguous than others. This estimation should be therefore taken as an indicator that options are available, rather than a statement of an exact number.

[301] There are some exceptions to this. In a setting where the Q-set is generated from interviews, and some or all of the persons interviewed will later constitute the pool of respondents in the Q-study, the Q-set is at least partially determined by the respondents. Even in this case, the researcher has the final word in what will end up in the Q-set. Another special case could be if the researcher decided to test the Q-set on himself, and include him- or herself among the respondents.

with the backdrop of the history of Western atheism, might be considered for inclusion.[302] At the same time, if the instrument is to be meaningful for assessing other worldview domains for comparative purposes, it becomes difficult to decide what items should be added, removed or reformulated. The topics I have mentioned should therefore not be seen as criticism against the present form of the instrument, but as a reminder that the limits for the self-referential engagement are nevertheless always determined by the scholar who assembles the Q-set of items.

Culturally Conditioned Items: The wording in some items is designed to capture a particular point of view that only works in a religious framework. Hence, item #82, "Is reluctant to reveal to associates a personal loss of faith", may be an issue in an environment where religiosity is the norm, as in the United States. Phil Zuckerman notes that whereas in America, one who publicly identifies as a non-believer may be subject to discrimination, in Scandinavia it is at times the opposite: One who identifies as a believer may face discrimination.[303]This may be an issue in Finland as well. Considering this, the above item might better be worded in Nordic countries as "Is reluctant to reveal to associates being converted to religion."

I am presenting this example simply to point out that some items might need reformulation to make them more relevant to Nordic countries. I believe, however, that a particular strength of instruments like FQS is that they aim at universal applicability. Inter-cultural comparisons become possible, which in and of itself is interesting. The results of this study will not only inform us about the situation in Finland, but can be also used to develop a more comprehensive understanding about worldviews around the globe.

Personal Interpretations of the Items: Whichever wordings are being used, it still remains a fact that everyone operates from a personal point of view, and can interpret the words or whole statements in unique ways. However, in studies that aim at discovering shared worldview elements from which prototypes emerge, the effect of one or a few respondents interpreting items differently is to some extent lost if there are many respondents. This may therefore motivate the aim to increase the number of respondents beyond what is normally recommended in Q-studies.[304] The present study has

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[302] It should be kept in mind, however, that Q-method, like R-method, seeks underlying factors behind the individual statements. This means that if any two items are nearly always sorted in a very similar fashion, one of them can be excluded from Q-set. An example to illustrate this is item #90 which is about reincarnation. There is no item addressing the law of karma, but since reincarnation and karma are two parts of the same process, it may not be necessary to separately assess both for an underlying preference to emerge. My list of additional non-religious items is meant to illustrate that there are aspects of non-religious discourse not directly addressed by the instrument, rather than suggesting that their inclusion would necessarily improve the instrument. Whether such items would be useful for providing a greater variety of empirically observed non-religious worldview prototypes is a question that is outside the scope of this thesis.

[303] Zuckerman 2008: 12-13. About discrimination in America, see Zuckerman 2014: 87 and 213-222

[304] It is nevertheless recommended that the size of the P-set (participant group) should remain smaller than the size of the Q-set (sample of worldview statements), since participants, not the items, are the variables in Q-methodology. See Watts and Stenner 2012: 71-73

more participants than what is the normal minimum recommendations, which makes the factor interpretation less sensitive to individual differences in item interpretations.

4.3.7 Conclusions about FQS

FQS does not have major limitations that would make it unsuitable for assessing non-religious worldviews in Finland. The predominance of religiously flavoured statements is probably more of an asset than a problem, since the instrument also incorporates statements that are positively salient for a non-religious viewpoint. The distribution form does not have consequences in the factor analysis, but care needs to be taken in the factor interpretation regarding the prototypes' subjective point of neutrality. Barrelled items present a potential challenge for the factor interpretation, where sensitivity for the whole configuration is necessary. Overall, the issue about item wordings boils down to this: individual items might be fine-tuned for the purpose of assessing non-religion in Finland or Nordic countries, but it is not clear whether the gains would outweigh the losses. Even though the scope of the present study does not involve comparisons between the emerging results and results from other FQS studies in other countries, they can be utilised for such purposes in later comparative studies.

It is now time to turn to the data-collection, the respondents and the results of the study.

5. RESPONDENTS

5.1 Strategies

Two separate strategies were employed to find participants. The first strategy was to directly target the relevant organisations that I have presented in the section about organised non-religion in Finland. Those non-religious organisations that have a visible role in Finnish society were considered. Out of these, I left the Finnish anti-cult organisation (Uskonnon Uhrit Ry) out. The organisation holds a critical position primarily towards small denominations which defy the religious norm in Finland, whereas their attitude towards majority religion is neutral. By this, the organisation differs considerably from the public profile of the other organisations, challenging minority dispositions rather than the national norm. I have introduced the organisations previously. The contact persons of the organisations were sent invitation letters, the contents of which were identical except for the name of the recipient. The contact persons were then asked to help in finding participants to the project by distributing the invitation through mailing lists and in other ways. The letter would introduce the research project, naming that it aims at examining the values and worldviews behind movements such as these.

It was mentioned in the invitation letter that the goal was to find "persons who in their lives emphasise non-religious humanism and customs, freethought or atheism, and who are in some way connected to a movement or organisation dedicated to such goals, such as the Union of Freethinkers, Finland's Humanist Association, or Finland's Union of Atheists." An example of an invitation letter is found in Appendix B. I have argued previously that this formulation together with the fairly long engagement with FQS and its concomitant interview are likely to increase the probability that the respondents are unusually committed to their non-religion. Some respondents traveled long distances to come to the interview, and the nominal compensation in the form of a movie ticket or a gift card for a chain of grocery stores cannot possibly explain the overwhelmingly positive response we received. At the end of the invitation, a web-link for the first step was provided, along with contact information of the persons working on the project (that is, project-leader Professor Peter Nynäs, postdoctoral researcher Mika Lassander, or researcher Janne Kontala) in order to either acquire more information or for obtaining survey forms by ordinary mail. Despite the option, nearly all respondents completed the first step through the project web-link. In a few cases, I mailed the form or gave the web-link for the first step after the respondent had already engaged with FQS.

Since at the outset it was not clear whether the invitation letters alone would provide a sufficient number of responses, and since from a Q-methodological point of view it is more desirable to seek a variety of viewpoints rather than to aim at demographic representativeness, I augmented the first

strategy with a small-scale snowball strategy, which is an adaptive technique that can be used with rare populations.[305] The snowball-technique starts with a small number of initial informants who can name additional members of the same population. When these additional persons are contacted, they can give further hints of potential participants, and so on, until either the number of respondents meets the requirements, or new names do not show up.[306] The technique is particularly useful with rare or hidden populations difficult to access by normal means, which was the primary motivation for using it as an additional strategy. I received some hints through personal contacts: people who knew me and simply wanted to participate, or who knew someone that might be interested in participating. All participants accessed in this way were connected to at least one of the organisations. Another way of applying the technique was to use the hints I received in the personal interviews with persons accessed through the official letters of invitation. In some cases, following up on such hints resulted in additional names that I contacted and managed to get in touch with. Some persons were contacted due to both holding a position of responsibility in some organisation, and being recommended by someone I already interviewed.

The responses varied: some organisations did not respond to the invitation at all, whereas Freethinkers Union and its affiliates were the most active in both disseminating the invitation and in responding favourably to it. The letters of invitation were sent in autumn 2012. The immediate response exceeded the expectations: more than a hundred persons expressed an interest to participate. The contact information was collected, and a plan was made to interview as many as possible, considering the geographical locations and economic resources. The interviews were started in October 2012, and the last interview was conducted in April 2013. I personally conducted most of the interviews. Five respondents were interviewed by FM Felix Pennanen, and one by Professor Peter Nynäs.

After the initial phase and as the data-collection continued, more people expressed interest to participate. The final number of potentially interested participants exceeded 150. Due to time and economic constraints, not all who showed interest were interviewed, as it would have been too demanding to travel to isolated locations to interview only one or a few participants. Also, some respondents reported their interest at a point when the final interview plan and schedule for travels were already arranged. The final number of respondents ended up being 79. Two respondents did not complete the FQS, which resulted in 77 completed sorts. These were included in the data-analysis and in the following overview on affiliations and basic demographic information.

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[305] Porter 2008: 690. The name Snowball sampling is often used. I prefer to call my application of the method as technique, since it would be technically incorrect to call the respondents in a Q-study a sample.

[306] Chromy 2008: 823-824

5.2 Information about Affiliations and Demographics

Affiliations: Freethinkers were by far the most active participants with 64 respondents, followed by Skepsis (17), Humanists (12), Protu (7) and Atheists[307] (1). Three respondents did not report any affiliation. Of the 74 respondents who specified their affiliations, 23 held more than one. The following combinations could be discerned: Freethinkers and Skepsis (10 respondents), Humanists and Skepsis (1), Freethinkers and Humanists (3), Freethinkers and Protu (5), Freethinkers, Skepsis and Humanists (4) and Atheists, Freethinkers and Humanists (1). Since the majority of the respondents were affiliated with Freethinkers, it is not surprising that most respondents holding multiple affiliations were affiliated with Freethinkers.[308] Another way of looking at it is that the majority of those affiliated in organisations other than Freethinkers were also affiliated with Freethinkers.[309] A final note about affiliation concerns exclusive affiliations - respondents who did not hold multiple affiliations. The numbers look like this: Freethinkers (42), Protu (3), Humanists (3), Skepsis (2) and no affiliation (3). The overall impression is clear. Even though Protu is the largest organisation in Finland by membership, in this study, Freethinkers is the dominant organisation. Skepsis was the second largest group in this study, which is not surprising considering that the size of its membership base is on a par with the Freethinkers. It should be noted, however, that it holds the second place in this study largely by being the prominent organisation for co-affiliation with Freethinkers; there are only two exclusive Sceptics.

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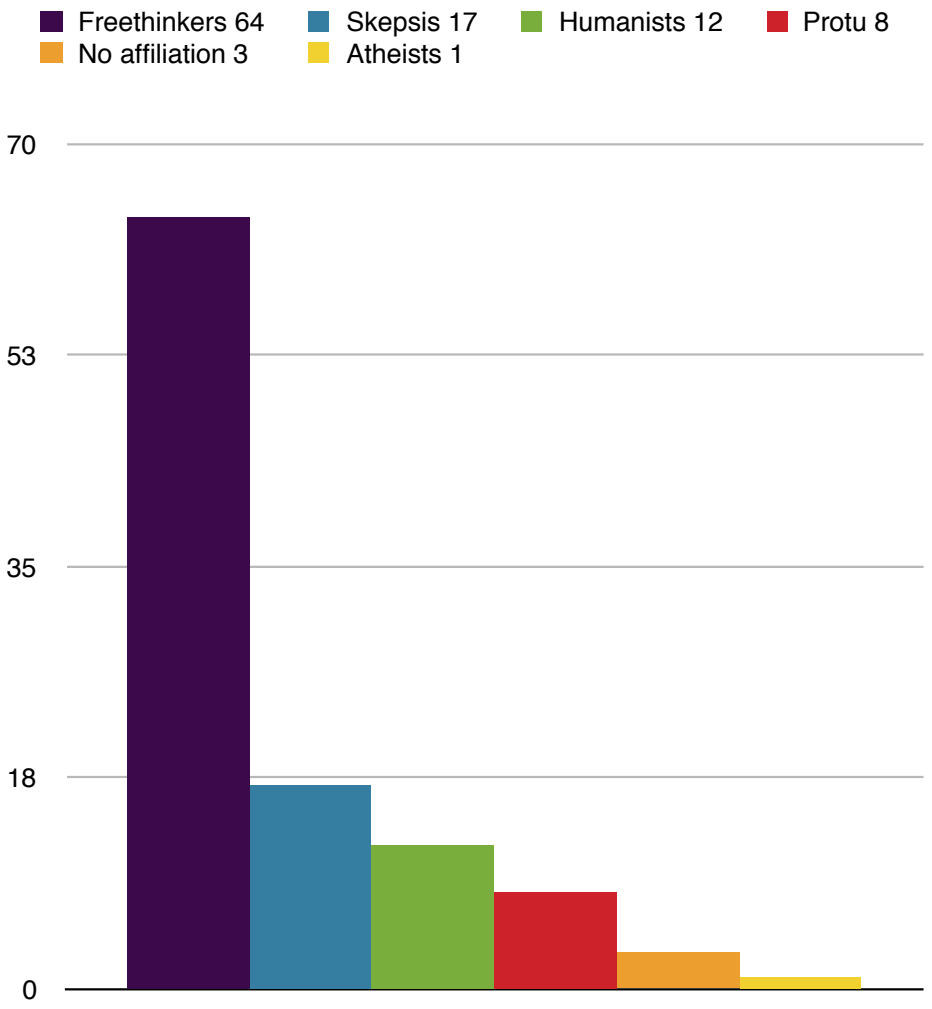
307 Capital Area Atheists

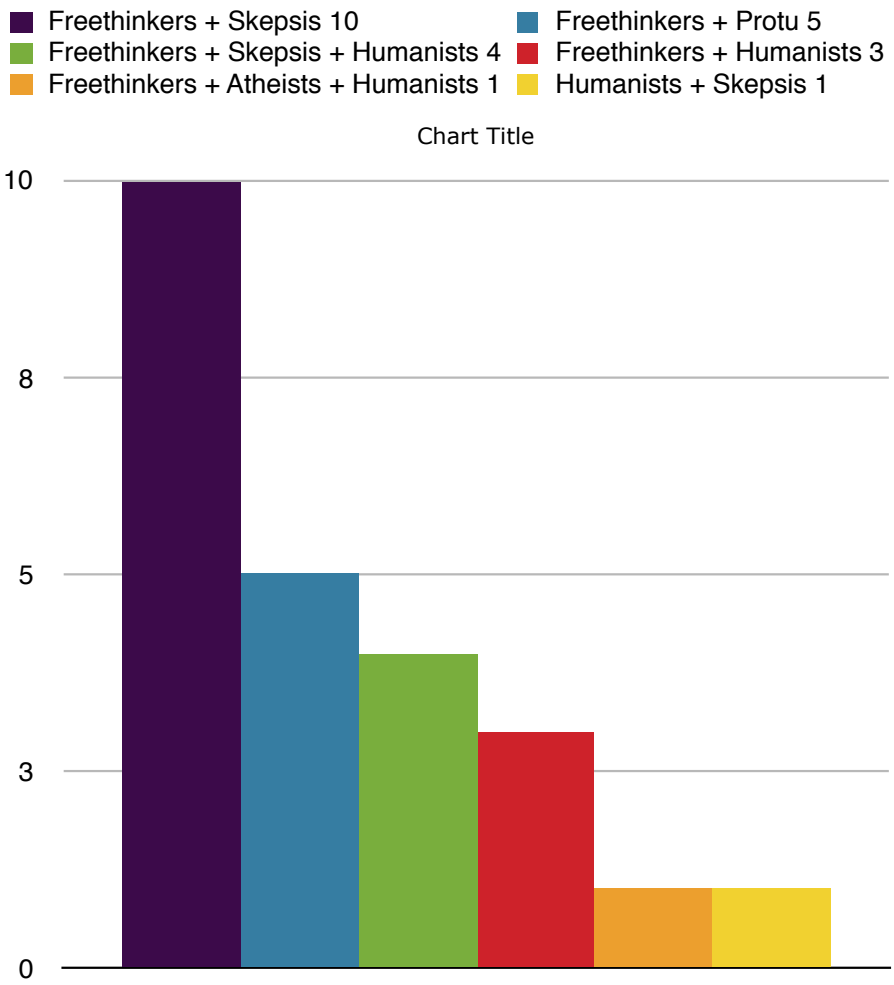
308 There was only one respondent with multiple affiliations that was not affiliated with Freethinkers.

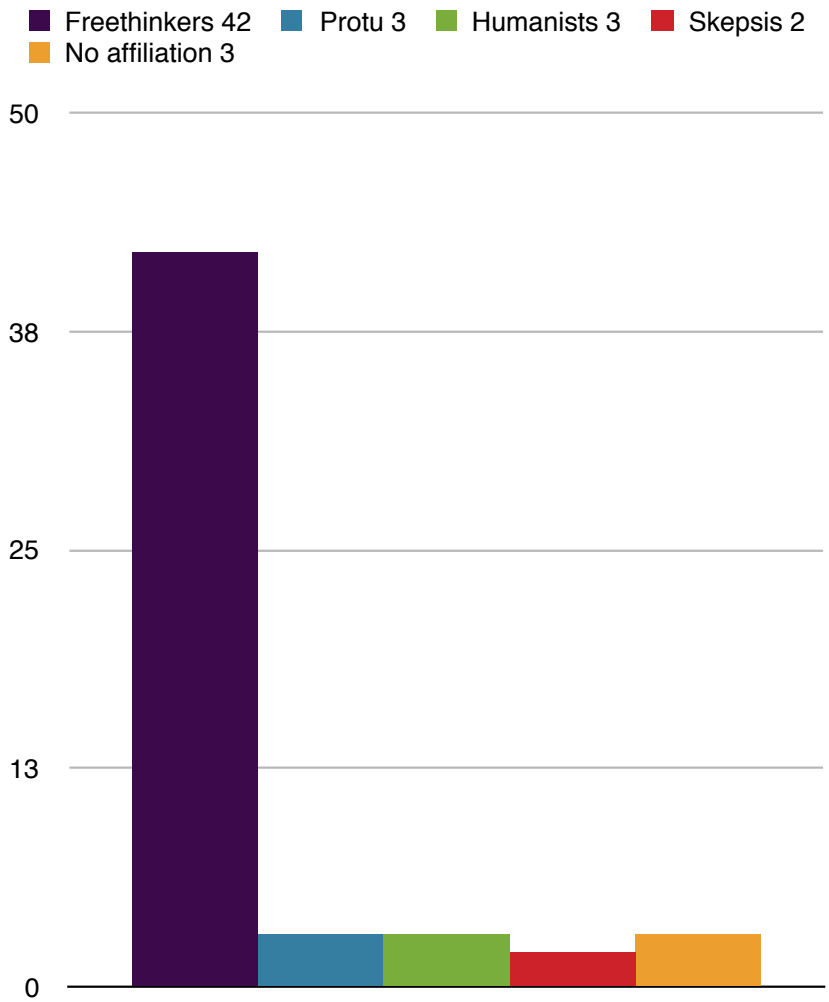
309 8 out of 11 Humanists were also Freethinkers, 4 out of 7 Protu-affiliated were also Freethinkers, 10 out of those affiliated with Skepsis were also Freethinkers, and the one Atheist was also a Freethinker.

4. Affiliations



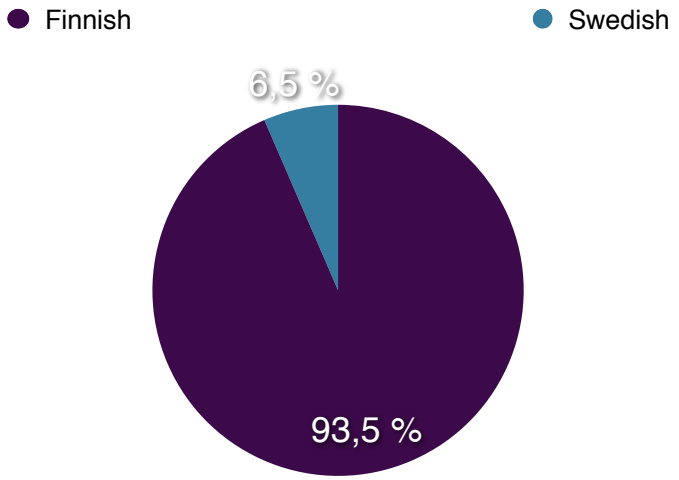
5. Multiple affiliations





6. Exclusive affiliations

Languages: Since both Swedish and Finnish have an official status in Finland, the respondents were given the option of participating in either language. On the national level, 89% speak Finnish and 5.3% Swedish.[310] The ratio amongst the respondents came close to the national figures: 93.5% (72 respondents) opted for Finnish, whereas 6.5% (5 respondents) preferred to do both FQS and the interview in Swedish.

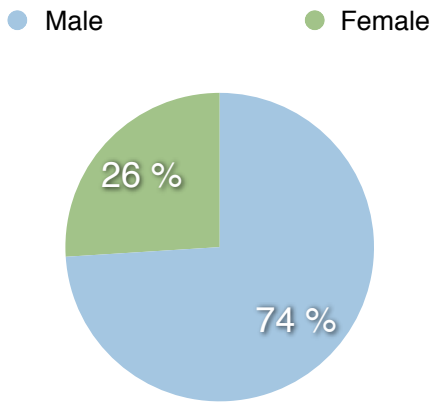


7. *Language*

[310] www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_vaesto_en.html

Gender and age: The Finnish atheist profile indicates that atheists are more likely to be young and male.[311] This pattern was clearly seen in the gender ratio, where 74% (57) were male and 26% (20) female. The age distribution, however, did not follow the atheist profile. In 2014, the mean age in Finland for males was 40.7 years and for females 43.4 years, whereas 56% of the respondents were 45 or older.[312] Atheist profiles need of course not translate directly into non-religious profiles. Furthermore, some studies have found that non-religious group-affiliates are older than the national mean.[313]Another possible explanation for the relatively high mean is related to Protu, the organisation that is the largest in Finland by memebership, and which has the youngest target audience. There are only two young Protu-affiliates amongst the respondents. Protu has a very practically oriented program. Young people who are interested in participating can register on the coming-of-age camps. It would probably be easier to reach the young participants and activists by contacting them directly on the camps, rather than by relying on email-invitations.

8. Gender

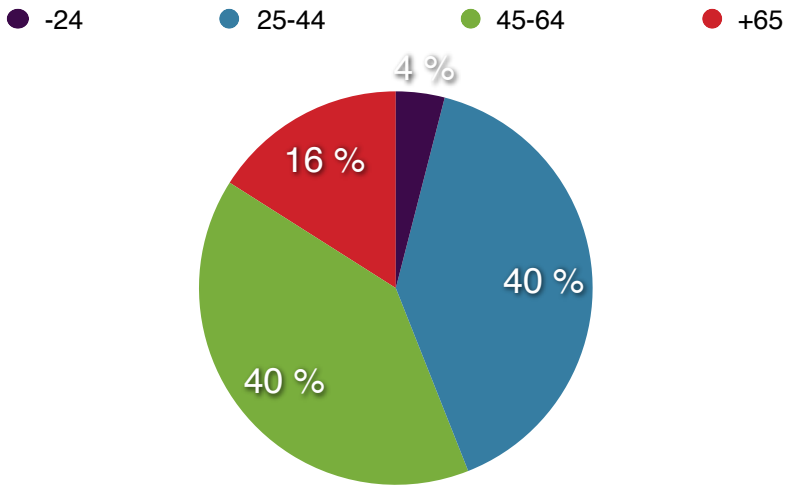


[311] Salomäki 2014: 7; Taira 2014: 253

[312] The result resembles that of Frank Pasquale (2007b and 2010), whose study of non-religious affiliates resulted in a mean-age above the non-religious non-affiliates.

[313] See Pasquale 2007b: 47, Pasquale 2010: 47-48; Hunsberger and Altemeyer 2006: 25 and Longden 2015: 88. Longden compares his results with those found by Colin Campbell nearly 50 years earlier, and shows that the age profile of the British Humanist Association has moved from a situation where 62% were younger than 50 to the present situation where 65% are older than 50.

9. Age



Levels of Education: According to some international profiles, a non-religious person is likely to be well educated. National contexts matter, however, and there are countries where higher education correlates negatively with atheism.[314] According to Taira, it is not possible to settle the issue conclusively in Finland.[315] Even so, the respondents of this study are better educated than the average Finn: 74% had completed tertiary education with 7% holding PhD degrees,[316] whereas on the national level, 39% hold a tertiary education.[317] There is, however, some reason to be cautious about concluding that the demographics presented here would point to the direction of higher educated non-religionists. The other groups that were contacted in the context of the larger research project Viewpoints to the World - environmental activists and conservative Christians - held similar profiles, with levels of education higher than the national mean.[318] It is, therefore, possible that either group-affiliation or volunteering to participate in studies like this, or both, correlate positively with education. Finnish freethinkers have historically been associated with the working class. With Freethinkers being the prominent affiliation in this study, we would not expect to see an educational level higher than the national mean, unless the historical association with working class is about to change. According to Antti Ellonen and Petri Karisma, the chairpersons of the Freethinkers' local associations in Turku and Tampere, a generational change is taking place, which amongst other things has meant that Freethinkers nowadays attract entrepreneurs and people with higher education.[319] Even though this observation, if correct, only concerns one of the organisations, it has relevance to the present study where Freethinkers is the largest affiliation.

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[314] Internationally, higher education was found to correlate with secularism by Braun 2012, and with disbelief in God by Azarvan 2013. These findings do not, however, inform us about the situation *within* one country. According to Keysar and Navarro-Rivera (2013: 571-572) in places such as the Czech republic, Germany and South Korea, higher education correlates with a lower percentage of atheists. That said, in most of the countries presented by Keysar and Navarro-Rivera, higher education correlates with a higher than average percentage of atheists. For American samples, see Hadaway and Roof 1988: 33-36, 44-45, Feigelman, Gorman, and Varacalli 1992: 139, 142 and Keysar and Kosmin 2007: 23-25 where education correlates positively with religious disaffiliation, in other words people who once were affiliated but no longer are. Phillips 2009: 28 finds positive correlation between being a religious "none" and higher education. According to Bainbridge 2009: 322, there are more atheists amongst college graduates than amongst those who have not completed four years of college education, whereas Keysar 2007: 36 finds agnostics to be the best educated group out of atheists, agnostics and those with no religion, the educational level of the atheists being closer to the national mean. Likewise, Cragun et al. 2011: 111 do not find the educational profile of the non-religious Americans to differ much from the national profile. For a study on the British Humanist Association, see Longden 2015. Argyle 2000: 61 refers to both American and British samples, where religious beliefs are less likely amongst the better educated. Mayrl and Oeur (2009) found that on the individual level, college education had a negative effect on religious practice, whereas the effect on beliefs was more complex, and some recent research has questioned the assumption that college experience increases the likelihood to apostasy.

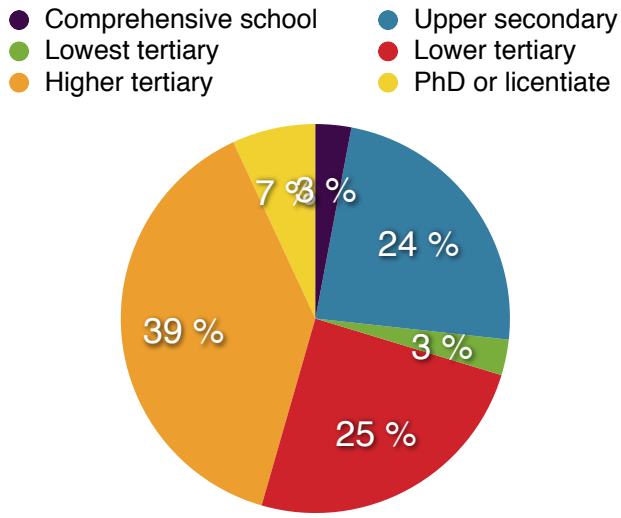
[315] Taira 2014: 253

[316] The educational data is available from 75 respondents. Two FQS participants could not be connected to their demographic data, or the data was not available. Three respondents' educational data is incompatible with the classification presented here. The figures show the percentages for those 72 respondents, whose data was available and compatible.

[317] http://www.oecd.org/edu/Finland_EAG2013%20Country%20Note.pdf

[318] Kati Niemelä (2003: 201-2011) has studied the importance of God in one's life, and found out that God is more important for those with higher education in almost all age-groups.

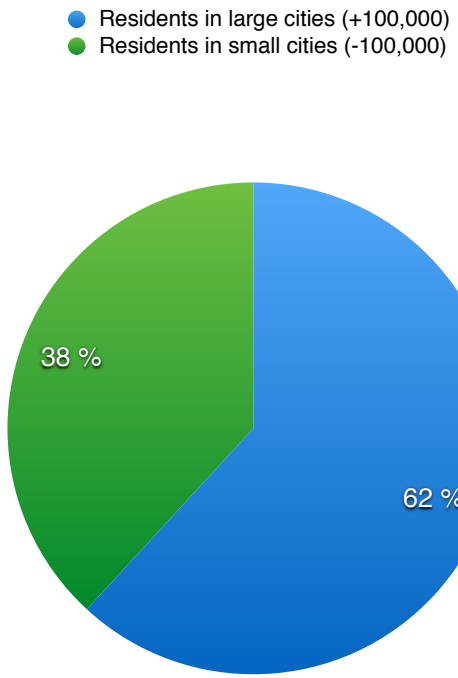
[319] Personal communication with Ellonen and Karisma, both in autumn 2013



10. Levels of Education

Places of Residence: Another feature of the profiles of both atheists and those with the least interest in religion in Finland is that atheists and non-religious are more likely to reside in a city with a population over 100,000.[320] If we place the dividing line at 100,000, and use the demographic information about the place of residence of those respondents where the information is available (N= 76), we can see that most respondents did live in larger cities. Due to the strategy that did not aim at representativeness for the whole country, as well as a pragmatic plan for effectively conducting the interviews, most of the meetings took place in Helsinki, Turku, Tampere and Oulu. This probably affected the outcome, and the most we can say is that the group-profile of the respondents does not contradict the general non-religious and atheist profiles regarding place of residence.

11. Places of residence



[320] Taira 2014: 252-253

Reflection on the above information shows that the language proportion of the respondent-group follows closely the national situation. The gender division of 74% male and 26% female respondents points to the profile of the Finnish atheist who is more likely to be male, even though the 3:1 ratio found amongst the respondents of this study is more male-dominated than would be expected amongst Finnish atheists. According to the general profile, the Finnish atheist is also more likely to be young, whereas 56% of the respondents were aged 45 and older. This is, however, not contrary to some international findings about the ages of non-religious group-affiliates. The levels of education are above the national mean. Finally, the majority of the respondents live in larger cities, whereas only one third of the Finnish population resides in larger cities. Clearly the group of respondents differs from the national figures for the whole country. It is not representative for Finland in general. Representativeness was also not the goal, as for Q-studies it is more important to have variation in perspectives. Concerns for national generalisations are simply not a central focus.

After presenting the demographic background of the present study, it is now time to explore in more detail what lies behind the numbers. I will begin by making a general characterisation of the respondents as a group, across a variety of themes. I will then proceed by presenting the results of the FQS. Next, I will examine the interviews by worldview prototype. I will conclude with a summary of the results, their implications for the study of non-religion, and proposals for future research.

6 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

I commence this chapter with the focus on respondents' reasons for affiliation because it will provide a general picture of the respondents as a group, especially granted that the study is specifically on the worldviews of affiliated rather than general non-religious individuals. Considerable variation could be discerned, as with many other topics.

6.1 Reasons for Affiliation

Many non-religious individuals do not affiliate with non-religious organisations. Some are nominally affiliated to a religious organisation or tradition: in a recent gallup, most respondents who self-identified as non-religious where at the same time at least nominally followers of some religious tradition.[321] This leads to the curious problem of trying to figure out the status of a non-religiously religious person. That aside, even those who are more explicit about their non-religiosity and are not affiliated with religious organisations, may choose to refrain from affiliations altogether, including non-religious affiliations. Previous research supports the assumption that non-religious individuals seldom actively participate in organisations even if they support their views.[322] The reasons are many; according to Patricia O'Connell Killen's interpretation, the explanation lies in the value put on independence, which one does not want to compromise by affiliating in the activities of an organisation. According to Frank Pasquale, prioritising independence leads some non-religious individuals to avoid becoming engaged with idealistic organisations all together, despite sharing or supporting their programs or views, while others are more selective and avoid primarily religious or political organisations, while participation in non-religious organisations is acceptable.[323] Obviously some kind of participation is acceptable for the respondents of this study. Let us look at the reasons they give for their chosen affiliations.

I begin by exploring what turned out to be the most prominent theme found in the interviews. The reasons for being affiliated to an organisation were mostly of a pragmatic nature. This was particularly the case with Freethinkers and Protu.

Affiliation due to Activism: Many respondents motivated why they were affiliated with the Freethinkers by saying that this organisation is the best means of influencing the Finnish society. Further elaborating on the desirable ways of influencing the society, the respondents often favoured a more pronounced separation of church and state and equality of stances. Sanja says she is not active in Freethinkers, but wants to give her support:

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[321] WinGallup 2012

[322] Pasquale 2007b: 44; Keysar and Kosmin 2007: 24, 26.

[323] O'Connell Killen 2007: 74; Pasquale 2007b: 44; see also Keysar and Kosmin 2007: 25.

> In my view we need here...church has quite a powerful organisation to advance its own cause, so some kind of force to counter that.[324]

Whereas many respondents shared Sanja's concerns, and felt that the non-religious minority needs a practical means to advance its cause and have its voice heard in the Finnish society, for some respondents the issue of equality meant considering the needs of both the religious and the non-religious. Wellbeing of those close to him is important for Leif, which is why despite being an atheist, he participates when relatives hold occasions of religious character: family gatherings, confirmations and the like. He has also worked together with local church-members for well-fare activities, such as supporting the local unemployed. And when he talks about his atheism, he says this:

> My atheism means that it does not matter if you have a religious mentality, it is your and only your business. My atheism means that church and state need to be separated. A common state must not support any religion more than others. We need to find equality.[325]

For Leif, the spirit of equality seems to have no anti-religious undertones. Sirkka, an active atheist thinks that freedom of religion and freedom for atheism go hand in hand.

> Freedom of religion is also freedom for atheism. And even though this word is not used and it is not found in the laws, it is still the same continuum...*if you want to defend freedom for atheism, then you have to kind of be prepared to defend also freedom for religion*.[326]

Experiences of discrimination can sometimes play a role in the decision to affiliate, but that was not a prominent theme in the interviews. Found to be much more common was simply to support the equality of stances, and the practical way of giving support was to participate in an organisation dedicated to that cause. Whereas influencing directly Finnish society into an equal direction was perhaps the most prominent single theme, those who elaborated on their involvement with Protu talked about how the camps bring young people together, increasing mutual tolerance[327] and helping young people to think independently.[328]

Affiliation due to Group Support: Another prominent reason for affiliation was the need to find support and like-minded company. For some, affiliation led to deep relationships, finding a spouse for instance. For others, it was about working together in interesting projects to advance the non-religious cause.[329] Sometimes just reading the magazine and being affiliated was enough to mitigate the feeling of being alone with one's worldview.[330] Ville has been involved with his local organisation

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[324] JK1039

[325] JK1009

[326] JK1060; italics added

[327] JK1062

[328] JK1038; JK1040

[329] JK1066; JK1068

[330] JK1024

for more than a decade. He has lost some of his initial enthusiasm, but since he feels closeness and solidarity towards the others, he wants to continue in his active role.[331] Pertti has for a long time been involved with both Freethinkers and Protu. He sees his role more as an organiser and facilitator than educator:

> I consider myself a contact person, not an educator. I get the locations, write invitations, and if someone wants information, I direct the person forward...It is keeping and establishing contacts with likeminded people.[332]

The respondents quoted above exemplify how a particular reason for affiliation predominates. Sometimes reasons may change with time: Some respondents discussed how at first it was important to get the association of other non-religious individuals, or the involvement was of a more ideological kind, but later the societal action started to occupy a more prominent place.[333]

Ideologically Motivated Affiliation: The non-religious magazines or public campaigns were occasionally mentioned as impetuses for the affiliation. Whereas some found the magazines of Skepsis or Freethinkers informative or entertaining, for Siiri, it was the bus-campaign that made the difference:

> And I need to mention that the impetus why I joined Freethinkers was the bus-campaign "There's probably no God." I thought it was excellent, totally awesome. And the discussion that ensued opened my eyes that oh, there is so much narrow-mindedness in this country that one has to support those who dare to express themselves differently.[334]

Besides the bus-campaign, the web-service for disaffiliating from church was mentioned in some interviews as an important public campaign.[335] Sometimes, however, public campaigns can be counterproductive. The same bus-campaign that was a source of inspiration for Siiri, was annoying for Jorma, who actively spoke against it.

> Yes, I did not like it. Because in my opinion it indicated that people cannot be ethical without religion. That was the impression that came across that ethics are only connected to religion. I protested, strongly...[336]

Another respondent, Reijo, was critical about the website for disaffiliating from church, since he did not consider Finnish religiosity to be particularly harmful.[337] Jorma and Reijo exemplify an impor-

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[331] PN1005

[332] JK1026

[333] E.g. JK1066; JK1068

[334] JK1074

[335] JK1029, JK1068 and JK1069

[336] JK1036

[337] JK1032

tant theme: an ideological distinction made *within* organised non-religion. In these cases, and in some others, the respondents clearly indicated that they opted for one affiliation due to not being able to relate to another one. Based on this study, the single most unsuccessful non-religious campaign in recent years would seem to be the Freethinkers' campaign for swapping Bibles for pornographic magazines. Pekka for instance named the campaign as an example of how aggressive Freethinkers are, and due to this aggressive image he chose to rather affiliate with Humanists.[338] Reijo, a former member of Freethinkers, talked critically about the campaign, even though he mentions as his primary reason for resigning his memberships the politically left orientation of the organisation.

These were the views of persons who chose not to presently affiliate with Freethinkers, and who criticised the campaign, or what it represented. However, even many present members found the campaign problematic. In the words of Joni:

> I cannot understand how anyone can even think anything like that...I do not see pornography as something particularly joyful. Shouting for your stance with raised fist is quite alien to me, I prefer to discuss peacefully...an atheist can say that e.g. Christianity denies sexuality or takes something out of it but if we go to pornography, it does the same thing in a reversed way[339]

It is easy to see why being critical towards one form of non-religion can inspire someone to affiliate with an organisation that represents a different orientation. Here, however, even freethinkers feel free to criticise other freethinkers.[340] The above observations point to the interesting phenomenon, which seems not altogether uncharacteristic to Freethinkers, nor non-religion: Being critical towards views of those who share the same affiliation.[341] Sirkka is apprehensive about the scenario where atheists would get political power:

> ...I am a little bit afraid particularly if atheists would get a lot of political power and they would form these kinds of institutions that use power, whether they be ideological or political or whatever, then how could they avoid all the problems that everyone else has caused. Seems like wishful thinking.[342]

Whereas Sirkka specifies the particular occasion and circumstances, where atheism might lead into problems, Ville is more generally critical towards Freethinkers. Despite being actively involved and appreciating the friendships he has with the people in his local organisation, he holds a negative attitude towards Freethinkers more generally.

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[338] JK1014

[339] JK1059

[340] See Ylikoski 2010 for a critical view written by a member of the Freethinkers board; Ylikoski told me in a personal communication that he also wrote a letter to the editor published in Helsingin Sanomat, where he likewise mentioned that many freethinkers actually opposed the campaign. I have not been able to locate the particular issue where the letter was published.

[341] See Pasquale 2007b: 44

[342] JK1060

> ...Freethinkers is a kind of cult...if someone raises questions in the forum and says that perhaps religions have some good aspects...as soon as someone talks about something positive in religiosity, the person is denounced. So in my opinion...if it was understood as a religious sect where no dissenting voices are tolerated, then it would be the same thing.[343]

It is at the first sight puzzling why he would be affiliated at all. His explanation is related to the earlier theme of group-support:

> I have not thought of disaffiliating, but it is partly because I am attached to the [activities of the local organisation] and I feel it is quite nice people.[344]

Another theme regarding Freethinkers was the perceived generational change, where the older generation was associated with political left, and the younger generation was associated with a more heterogenous political base, and a higher education. Expressed by Jens:

> There are all kinds of people. There are real crackpots and fanatical communists. The framework where I belong consists more of younger, academic, scientifically and technologically oriented people. It is this newer generation that has taken over. It is after all the leftist background that I consider a burden. Yes, because actually Freethinkers do not have any unifying ideology other than advancing freethought and - what is most important for me - the equality of stances.[345]

Other respondents echoed Jens's observation: Freethinkers has historically been associated with political left and working class, whereas nowadays the organisation attracts younger, educated and politically more diverse people.[346]

Some of these themes will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter, when I present the prototypes. I would now like to introduce one more theme that motivates affiliation: affiliation without any clear preference.

Affiliation without Preference: I considered the affiliation to be without preference, if it was chosen mostly because it was locally available, or if the respondent said that the choice of affiliation was incidental. This kind of affiliation is exemplified by Leif: A friend of his asked him to participate, so he did. He was likewise suggested that he get training for giving public non-religious speeches, and he did that as well.[347] Tero has been affiliated for decades. When I asked him why he chose to affiliate in his particular organisation, he did not seem to care about it too much:

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[343] PN1005

[344] PN1005

[345] JK1037

[346] JK1007; JK1055; JK1069;

[347] JK1009

> This is not terribly important for me, it is mostly because this [Freethinkers] is here, on this area. If it were not, I would probably not be involved. I am perhaps a little indifferent, I do not want to exclaim this to others, it is my own business.[348]

Six respondents were like Leif or Tero. Some respondents even held multiple affiliations without stated preference. It might be going too far to presume that they are like Tero, who do not care much. They probably care more, since they have more affiliations. Out of the 22 respondents with multiple affiliations, nine reverberated the usual Freethinker concerns about equality of stances and separation of state and church. One respondent discussed the positive effects of Protu camps. Only one respondent specified different reasons for two different affiliations: Scientific thinking motivated affiliation with Skepsis, whereas longing for a more equal society motivated affiliation with Freethinkers.[349] Yet another respondent mentioned the magazine to be the reason for affiliating with Skepsis and Freethinkers, both being organisations that publish a magazine.[350]

Yet many did not specify any particular reason for preferring a particular affiliation over others. Eight respondents did not specify any reasons for any of their affiliations. They did talk about their non-religion and gave arguments for being without religion, just not in the context of their affiliation. To conclude: the majority of those with multiple affiliations also argued for at least one of their choices. Therefore, it seems likely that multiple affiliations mean a notable non-religious interest, rather than affiliating several times incidentally.

It is time to summarise what we know about the affiliations of the respondents. Freethinkers is the organisation with most affiliated respondents in this study. In some cases, affiliation seemed to be without any other reason than the organisation being locally available, or otherwise incidentally chosen. More often, however, the respondents specified reasons for affiliation. These were mostly pragmatic: promoting an equal society with a more pronounced separation of state and church; support of likeminded people; and informative and inspiring public campaigns and magazines. Such motivations make sense, yet it is good to be aware of that there are cases where arguments and affiliations do not go hand in hand. Even though many respondents who argued against some aspect of non-religion used that argument as a reason for affiliating with another organisation, there were those who managed to both criticise and affiliate with the same organisation.

6.2 Personal Worldview Stories

As Phil Zuckerman has noted, the national context is likely to influence the shape of one's non-religiosity. By comparing the narratives of American and Scandinavian respondents he has found out

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[348] JK1005

[349] JK1019

[350] JK1034

marked differences about how the non-religious individuals experience their rejection religion, their opinions regarding religion, and their beliefs and articulations about the non-existence of God. In Zuckerman's sample, the Swedish and Danish respondents did not have much to say about how they came to their present non-religiosity, whereas the American respondents often described the event as dramatic, involving personal struggle, and something evoking plenty of reflection. The Scandinavian respondents held fairly positive opinions towards religion, whereas the Americans were critical. And whereas the Scandinavians were more likely to be agnostic about the existence of God, the Americans did not hesitate to affirm explicit atheism.[351] I will consider the respondents of this study regarding these and some other themes.

The interviews gave an opportunity to the respondents to elaborate on the development of their worldview. Were they always non-religious, or would it be more appropriate to talk about a process, or perhaps a deconversion? I decided to investigate these questions in detail. I found three different types of narratives: The first type was what I call a stable narrative: either leaving a vague or nominal religiosity behind, or never having been religious. A second type involved deconversion from a religious disposition that was affirmed in adolescence or adulthood. And a third type had moved towards some kind of spirituality or religiosity.

Vague or no Religious Background: The most typical journey to the present worldview was much like that of Zuckerman's Scandinavian respondents: Many respondents were brought up in an environment, where religion was not explicitly denied, yet not strongly affirmed either. One or both of the parents might have been members of the church, and the individual might have been baptised, participated in the confirmation, engaged in occasional prayer, yet quite naturally just left it behind. It was usually not a big deal, rather a natural development, where the respondents just did not find any good reason to perpetuate beliefs in religious doctrines such as the existence of God, religious practices such as praying, or church membership. The following narrative was found to be quite typical:

Eeva grew up in a home that she describes as 'nominally Christian': she participated in the religion classes at school, underwent confirmation, and used to sometimes play music at the parish. She remembers wanting to disaffiliate from church at the age of 16.

> I do not remember the reason...I do not remember it was anything radical...My mother did not agree because of what the neighbours would say and then I just forgot about it.

Later on in her early twenties she was studying in another city. When she came to pay a visit, she noticed that the administrative office of the local parish was still open, and she thought:

> Now I go and disaffiliate from church...It was done in five minutes. I felt like yes, that is it.

[351] Zuckerman 2012a: 8-19

Whereas the whole thing has never been a major topic in her life, now that her children go to school, where some teachers publicly affirm Christianity, she feels a need to defend her stance:

> I am in fighting spirits now. A large number of children in that school have a similar background...I have considered making an official complaint.[352]

Two observations can be made. First, the pattern of giving up religion: Religion has played some role mostly due to social reasons, and giving it up is rather undramatic. Jens, identifying himself as an atheist since the age of 11, said:

> Because supernatural things were discussed at home, as a child I believed it. Then it gradually dawned on me that they do not hold.[353]

Or Pekka, who understood at the age of five that he had been cheated about Santa Claus, gave up his belief in God as well.[354]

Second, whereas on the individual level being non-religious may not be such a big deal, when one encounters discrimination or lack of respect, it becomes natural to defend one's worldview.

The respondents above have not experienced religion as something evil. At one point they just realised it did not make sense to them. Some respondents, however, did discuss negative personal encounters with religion. Jukka remembers his mother raised him by regularly flogging him, because

> the Bible says: One who spares the rod hates his child...she used to love me - by flogging.[355]

Jani grew up in a conservative Christian family where the father was a priest. He remembers the upbringing as strict: On Sundays, church attendance was obligatory, and his mother was not allowed to knit. He also saw a lot of hypocrisy, particularly in his father:

> [He]...acted as spiritual leader, yet had extramarital relationships. Then the same person gives marital guidance and declares forgiveness.[356]

It would be tempting to attribute the alienation from religion to experiences like these. That is, however, not what the respondents report. In none of the above mentioned three narratives did the respondents mention personally being particularly religious at any point of their life.

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[352] JK1072

[353] JK1037

[354] JK1014

[355] JK1049

[356] JK1024

Harri explicitly states never believing in God.[357] Rather than finding out at one point that religion does not make much sense, it never made any sense. Kirsi, for instance, cannot clearly remember if she ever held a belief in a higher power. The earliest memories stemmed from the age of 9 or 10 when religious topics were discussed at school. She remembers thinking that none of it makes any sense. Later she participated in confirmation,

> ...because I thought I would get presents. But two days after confirmation I convinced even my mother to disaffiliate from church.[358]

This is similar to Lasse, who remembers identifying as an atheist at the age of ten. He says it may be possible that he might have believed in God in very young age, but

> ...as far as I can remember, I have never believed in God. It is absent from my life.[359]

These examples present what I consider to be the major theme regarding one's journey to the present worldview. Religion may have been part of the cultural and familial background. Some may have been mildly religious in their adolescence. Some were never religious. The consistent theme is that religion was never experienced as personally important. Against this pattern I would like to present two minor themes that diverge from the above. The first one is deconversion from active religiosity, and the second one is developing interest in spirituality.

Deconversion: According to Keller and associates, deconversion can imply losing a formerly meaningful religious experience, embedment in one's previous community, criticising or doubting one's previously held beliefs and practices, and disaffiliation from a community.[360] Heinz Streib lists six different trajectories of deconversion. Three trajectories are about migration within the religious field, where the individual exits a previously held religious affiliation to get involved with a new religious organisation. Two additional trajectories involve privately held religious beliefs and/or practices without a new religious affiliation, after a previously held religious affiliation is rejected. None of these trajectories fit into the respondents of this study, who exemplify a sixth trajectory: the secularising exit, involving termination of previously held religious beliefs and practices, and termination of membership in organised religion.[361]

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[357] FP1002

[358] JK1067

[359] FP1001

[360] Keller, Klein, Hood and Streib 2013:119

[361] Streib 2012: 272. Streib's definition of the secularising exit could be modified for the present purposes, as one of the respondents had maintained the previously held religious affiliation due to social reasons, despite relinquishing the beliefs and practices and adopting a visible role in a non-religious organisation. The more appropriate formulation would be "termination of previously held religious beliefs and practices, *often with a concomitant* termination of membership in organised religion." However, this respondent does not otherwise fit into the pattern described here, since the religious beliefs were abandoned in the early childhood. I have decided to include only those cases where deconversion was about beliefs, practices and affiliation held in adolescence or adulthood.

Whereas most respondents talked about their childhood beliefs as equivalent to believing in Santa Claus, and about engaging in religious activities such as prayer or confirmation mostly out of social obligations, around 10%[362] reported being religious in adolescence or adulthood.

Veli found inspiration for giving up religion by watching Richard Dawkins on Youtube, something he no longer does. In his youth he underwent confirmation, and continued evening prayer up to adulthood. He says it provided a nice feeling, and that it took a while to give up the habit.[363] Elias participated in a religious group together with his mother. The group held millenial beliefs, deified their leader, and discouraged their members from being actively involved in the society. He describes his disillusionment as a gradual process. He first started doubting the leader due to inconsistencies in the teachings, then read critical texts on the internet published by ex-members, and finally started to consider:

> ...what if instead of all this supernatural this fellow is just a dude. And then suddenly all pieces fell in their places... I understood how everything would work by [understanding] this fellow being just a dude.

After this, Elias started to reconsider his beliefs. The process of coming to the present worldview was not easy. Particularly coming to terms with the idea of his mortality was difficult. Nowadays, however, he considers himself an atheist.[364]

Jouni grew up in a family where both parents were religious. He describes the change in his worldview as a result of asking questions, and not receiving satisfying religious explanations:

> ...if for instance new heavens and earths are created where all people act according to the will of God...how would it be practically possible. They would either have to be zombies utterly governed by God, in which case free will, which Christians consider essential, would disappear. Or before creating the new heaven and earth, molecular changes would have to take place, to take away the part of brain capable of doing evil. Even then there would be no free will. So this is one of the basic questions, what is the mechanism. If something works, there has to be a mechanism how it works.

Jouni has found inspiration in the works of popular atheist authors: Dawkins, Harris, Dennett and Hitchens. At one point he could no longer accept something just because "that is the way it is", even less "because that is what it reads."[365]

Whereas these examples tell us about leaving a faith behind, and in that sense share particular resemblance with Zuckerman's American respondents' stories, there is something about the narrated stories during the investigation that differ markedly: The deconversion took place at one point, but there was usually nothing dramatic about it. The respondents who had been religious before, in the

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[362] JK1002, JK1025, JK1044, JK1048, JK1059, JK1074, FP1004, JK1008

[363] JK1025

[364] JK1008

[365] JK1002

threshold to adulthood and even later in life, had some critical things to say about religion. Why would they otherwise have given it up? But overall the narratives did not indicate any marked negativity. The respondents often considered religion analytically, finding some aspects of religion nice or useful, and others problematic. Leaving it behind did not seem to involve dramatic experiences in the way Zuckerman describes his American respondents who also tended to be critical in their comments about religion.

It is one thing not to criticise something that one is alienated from, but it is quite another to move towards something that would, at least in the religious studies sense, be considered a kind of religion; and I will, thus, turn towards this now. So far we have seen examples about always being without or moving away from religion, yet some respondents seem to have moved towards a worldview that could be described as spiritual, or even religious, although not of an Abrahamic kind.

Moving towards Spirituality: For many, and often exemplified by Christianity, the polarity between religion and non-religion is clear. Without specifying different religious traditions, it seems evident that the national situation has largely defined what religion as an object of differentiation means. Others, however, made distinctions: six respondents considered Buddhism acceptable while rejecting Christianity, and some respondents went even further. While for two respondents Buddhist teachings made a lot of sense, there were two other respondents that even characterised their present worldview as some kind of Buddhism.[366] Simo, a middle-aged physiotherapist, expressed that he had a fearful relationship with Christianity due to being intimidated with ideas of sin and hell. He says Buddhist texts helped maintain his sanity.[367] Kari, a freethinker, has moved several times from one religious group to another. Now he is a member of a small non-Christian religious organisation.[368] Lahja, a mother in her early thirties, says she grew up in a non-religious atmosphere. She informed that she was aware of the existence of religion, but could never understand it. At the age of 18 she became interested in New Age, and started reading books related to this. Now she practices yoga. She thinks it is possible to have a personal relationship with God, since "everyone is in a way god."[369]

Even though some respondents find inspiration in Buddhism and alternative spirituality, and a few actually identify themselves as religious - although not Christian - religious identification remains an exception: most of the respondents are prepared to respect the religious faith of others, and some are able to live in a relationship with a believer,[370] yet it usually makes little sense to them personal-

[366] JK1002; JK1053

[367] JK1051

[368] JK1053

[369] JK1038

[370] The topic came up occasionally. The range of different options, aside from those who share their non-religious worldview with their spouse, is from not knowing about the beliefs of the spouse (FP1002) through being married to a church-member (JK1006, no information about the beliefs of the spouse) to dating a Christian (JK1059)

ly. At the same time, these individuals are unusually committed to being different from religion. It is not that they are indifferent to religion.

It is due to this commitment that I would like to explore a topic that repeatedly comes up in research on non-religion: when people answer surveys about their beliefs and identities, in many places including Finland, there are fewer self-identified atheists than those who say they do not believe in God. I would now want to explore what kinds of tags the respondents of this study use for self-identification, and how they understand these identity tags.

6.3 Non-religious Identities

It has been argued that in the late-modern society, identities are increasingly becoming transitory, unstable, requiring reflexivity and in a state of production,[371] and that it be therefore preferable to view identities as continual processes rather than as something fixed.[372] In the examination of identities as stated by the respondents, I am not making claims about whether the identities of the respondents would be relatively stable or in a state of change. The previous section about worldview narratives provides hints of at least some of the available options in this regard, where the stable narratives might point to a concomitant stability in self-identification, whereas deconversion and moving towards spirituality narratives would point to a processual identity formation. Such assessment, however, is not within the scope of this study. Most that could be said is that when some respondents claim that their present self-identification has its origins in their adolescence, their own view of their identity points to stability. In some other cases a more processual identity narrative can be recognised. Since I do not have such data available but in a few cases, I will not address this aspect of identity. Instead, this section treats identity-statements as snapshots at the time of the interview. This said, it is interesting to consider cases of multiple identities that will be presented in the end of the section.

According to Peter Beyer, an either-or dichotomy where a respondent can identify as belonging to one of the available options for religion, or belonging to ‘none’, does not do justice to the complexity involved with understanding identification. For this reason, he suggests a model of punctuated continuum of religious self-description to better capture the nuances involved. At one end of this continuum there are the atheists who are definitely not religious, and on the other end there are those with exclusive religious identity that excludes both non-religious and alternative religious identities. Somewhere in between these positions we find the spiritual but not religious, culturally religious, agnostics, and others.[373] This model, however, does not explain a prominent feature in this

[371] Hovi, Illman and Ingman 2015: 89; Giddens 1991

[372] Utrianen, Hovi and Broo 2012: 198-199

[373] Beyer 2015: 138-141

study: Altogether 16 respondents stated multiple identities. This is particularly interesting, as it took place during one and the same interview, not in two or more separate interview occasions. In her PhD thesis, Ann af Burén presents a wheel-model of identification, to account for the simultaneous multiple identities of her respondents.[374] There were cases where the same respondent used both religious and non-religious identifications during the same interview, such as "completely Jewish, somewhat Buddhist, considerably agnostic, considerably atheist and somewhat of a seeker."[375] The model allows for such apparent incongruences, acknowledging that on the one hand, the respondent may describe different aspects of herself with the different identity tags. On the other hand, different aspects of the signifier, such as religion, are being referred to with the different tags. This helps the researcher to understand how a respondent may use simultaneously different identities without engaging in self-contradiction even in cases where it might seem so on the surface. Of course, the respondents of this study overwhelmingly do not identify as religious, even though a few respondents were affiliated with the Lutheran church.[376]The multiplicity of identifications is mostly about describing different aspects of what it means to be non-religious. Unlike af Burén's semi-secular Swedish respondents, the respondents of this study are very clear about their position towards religion, which is the other that they are differentiating from.

There is one more feature about identities that needs to be mentioned. Despite the context of the interview that is likely to have encouraged the respondents to mention identities internal to the non/religious discourse, some respondents nevertheless mentioned identities that address aspects that have no direct relevance to non-religion: vegan, optimist, reformer and pacifist. In every case these were used in addition of another, more directly non-religious identification. Their very existence points to the possibility of modifying af Buréns wheel-model by adding additional layers, or wheels. If the innermost wheel stands for which aspect of oneself is being referred to with the chosen identity, and the next wheel surrounding the innermost one is about the options for non/religious identification, a third and perhaps even more wheels could be added for identities that the individual may use in other contexts. It is conceivable that even a publicly non/religious person might assume other identities at home, in leisure, at work and so on. We could get a number of non-exclusive identities that are activated in different situations. This consideration has relevance for the broader worldview theory, whereas for the assessment of non-religion it does not seem necessary. I am therefore not presenting the identifications that fall outside the non-religious discourse.

Even though there was no systematic inquiry into the self-identifications, many respondents did provide out of their own initiative such information in the interviews. The analysis of the interviews reveals that two identities are much more prominent than others. The most popular self-identifica-

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[374] af Burén: 2015: 133-173

[375] af Burén 2015:137

[376] Two respondents where affiliated with the Lutheran church. One of them explicitly stated that it was only due to social reasons (JK1014). The other one self-identified as atheist, without any simultaneous identification tilting towards religion (JK1059). There is only one case (JK1053) where the respondent had chosen to affiliate with a minor non-Christian religious denomination out of reasons that seemed to be connected to personally held beliefs.

tion is atheist, used by 23 respondents. The next most popular is non-religious,[377] used by 18.[378] After these two, there is clear gap: five respondents self-identified as agnostics, five as secularists, five as sceptics, four as humanists, three as freethinkers, and three as "someone with a scientific worldview." Negative definitions such as atheist or non-religious are sometimes seen as problematic, as it is religion or theism that provides the normative base that both defines and sets limits to one's identity.[379] In this study, however, more than half of the respondents self-identified as either atheist, non-religious or both. Some of these respondents used simultaneously other identifications as well, but it is clear that these two negative identities are acceptable options amongst the respondents of this study. Lorna Mumford has suggested that where religious affiliation is considered as normative by wider society, some non-religious individuals my conceal their lack of religious beliefs in contexts where overt non-religious identity might be a source of concern or conflict.[380] In the present study, the context would be arguably reversed: participants were contacted due to their affiliation, and they knew it. From this point of view, it is not surprising to see the frequent usage of these and other self-identifications that express aspects of non-religion such as sceptic, freethinker or humanist.

There were other, minor self-identifications. One of them*, open worldview,* refers to an explicit refusal to give one's worldview any name, or to identify oneself with any existing designation. This is different from those instances where the respondents simply did not talk about their identity. The respondents that I have classified with an open worldview were individuals who did discuss their identity, and concluded that they do not want to give it a name.

21 respondents did not specify any worldview identity, or provided an identity that is not relevant for the study of non-religion. Amongst the former are those respondents who did discuss their beliefs, for instance by stating that they would not believe in God, or that they would reject religious beliefs. Since they did not use any clear identity-tags such as atheist, non-religious, or rationalist, I have excluded such instances from this investigation.[381] Amongst the latter are the respondents who self-identified as vegan, optimist, reformer or pacifist. I have included in the investigation those

[377] Irreligious is another possible translation for the Finnish "uskonnoton". The Swedish terms that were used were "*religionsfri åskådning*" (non-religious outlook) and "*icke-religiös perspektiv*" (non-religious perspective).

[378] Both of these descriptors came up in the interviews in contexts outside of explicit self-identification. Here I have constrained the investigation to only those instances, where the respondents talk about themselves.

[379] Tomlins and Beaman 2015: 15

[380] Mumford 2015: 153

[381] I have refrained from naming the respondents based on their reported beliefs, since the present analysis is about explicit self-identifications, not about in which category the respondent would analytically belong based on the content of the beliefs.

identifications that have religious or spiritual connotations: Self-identified Buddhists and pantheists are included.[382]

I will present the statistics in the following table, where I have used some license for interpretation. A person who self-identified as a doubter[383] is included amongst the sceptics; those who either self-identified as secularists or said they have a secular worldview were included amongst the secularists. On the other hand, those with a scientific worldview were given no other name, as I could not come up with a more suitable and commonly used identification tag.[384]

[382] Since these identifications were only a few, I want to specify each case. One respondent self-identified as satanic Buddhist, and another one as post-Buddhist. There were no plain Buddhists. One respondent self-identified as "perhaps pantheist" and another one referred to one of her affiliations as being pantheistic. Clearly, such identifications are a bit vague, yet I wanted to include them, since they represent a striking contrast to the rule of primarily using identifications that have non-religious connotations.

[383] JK1034

[384] "Scientist" or "supporter of scientism" would clearly not do justice to the individuals' self-understanding.

Identification	Frequency	Identification	Frequency
Atheist	23	Rationalist	2
Non-religious	19	Materialist	2
Agnostic	5	Darwinist	2
Secularist	5	Pantheist	2
Sceptic	5	Buddhist	2
Humanist	4	Open worldview	2
Freethinker	3	Apatheist	1
Scientific worldview	3	Naturalist	1

12. Identities

Since the data regarding identity was not collected in a systematic fashion, I will only present some general observations. One observation is something that I have mentioned earlier in the discussion about non-religion: non-religion is clearly something many respondents use in reference to themselves, which indicates it is a suitable descriptor for the respondents as a group. Even though there were more self-identified atheists, there were also many who stated that they are not atheists, whereas there were none who denied being non-religious. Non-religious has therefore notable emic grounding amongst the respondents as an identity-tag, besides being analytically appropriate. It does not seem to divide the respondents into those who find it acceptable and those who reject it, the way atheist identity does.

A second observation is about the relative popularity of atheist identity: ca. 30% of all respondents and 41% of those who talked about their identity. This can be compared to the figures for the whole Finnish population, where the percentage of self-identified atheists has ranged from 3% to 13%.[385] The respondents of this study do not hesitate to identify themselves as atheists the way Finns in general do. This may not come as a surprise, yet it is also in place to note that there were less self-identified atheists than other self-identifications combined. It seems therefore wrong to think of the

[385] Taira 2014: 250. The larger figures were obtained in surveys that allowed multiple identity choices.

affiliated non-religious as predominantly self-identified atheists. Due to the fact that the respondents were obtained in a non-random manner, this conclusion is non-generalisable, but gives an indication for potential future research.

A third observation regards the relationship between affiliation and identity. One might presume that identity correlates with group affiliation. This study indicates that there may be some truth to this. Those three respondents who identified themselves as freethinkers were also affiliated with Freethinkers. Similarly, out of the five respondents who identified as sceptics, four were affiliated with Skepsis. Atheist identities are, however, found in all affiliations, and non-religious identities are found amongst all other affiliations except in Capital Area Atheists, which is an affiliation held by only one respondent.

Amongst those affiliated with Freethinkers, Skepsis and Atheists, atheist was the most popular identity. This, however, was not so for those affiliated with Humanists: non-religious identity was more popular, with five instances, whereas only two atheists were affiliated with Humanists. Interestingly, both of them were also affiliated with Freethinkers. In other words, there were no self-identified atheists amongst those who were affiliated with Humanists, if they were not also affiliated with Freethinkers. This points to a possible future research project that would compare the self-identifications of those who are exclusively affiliated with Finnish Humanists with those affiliated with other Finnish non-religious organisations.

Many respondents told that the choice of affiliation was either incidental, or determined by what was locally available, or a result of considering what is the practically best means of changing the Finnish society. Freethinkers is a fairly large organisation. Only Protu has more members. Freethinkers also has many local organisations. In many places in Finland, affiliation with Freethinkers is the only available option for a non-religious affiliation. Freethinkers is also fairly visible in Finland, and has a long history of societal action. It may therefore be the natural choice for a non-religious affiliation. Finally, due to its visible and effective public campaigns such as the website eroakirkosta.fi which is meant to facilitate an easy disaffiliation from church, people are likely to associate Freethinkers with a pro-non-religious force in the Finnish society. It may therefore seem an obvious choice to affiliate with Freethinkers if one is interested in promoting a non-religious cause in Finland. This means that in many cases, affiliation with Freethinkers is often likely to be more a matter of practical considerations than an identity question. Indeed, as we have seen previously, many respondents did motivate their affiliation in pragmatic terms. The conclusion is that affiliating with Freethinkers in the Finnish context does not have to mean that freethinker be the primary self-identification.

Multiple Identities: In some cases, the multiple identities were rang-ordered. One respondent, for instance, preferred to self-identify as non-religious rather than atheist, yet used both self-identifica-

tions in the interview.[386] More often no preferences were given. I did not find any particularly interesting patterns when I examined which identities combine with each other. We can nevertheless note that atheist combined with secularist, rationalist, humanist, non-religious, freethinker, darwinist, materialist, agnostic and sceptic, once or twice with each. It is hardly surprising that atheist identity did not combine with pantheist or Buddhist. The combination of atheist with agnostic is somewhat interesting. When asked about his identity, Harri[387] started by saying:

> Hard atheist or materialist. There is nothing spiritual, everything is matter. Science has not yet found out everything, but I do not believe in ghosts or gods or such. And I am quite confident about it.

Then he added:

> One has to be an agnostic, to be intellectually honest - if God exists I do not know but you do not know either. The hard core agnostic can say so that no-one can know that no...We have no evidence. I am also sceptic. These are connected.

The impression that emerges is not a lack of thoughtfulness about the apparent incompatibility of agnosticism with some forms of atheism. Rather, it appears Harri is well aware of the distinctions and different meanings of these terms. Analytically Harri would be a negative atheist. Even though he says he is quite confident about the non-existence of god, it seems that the qualifier *quite* is related to what he calls intellectual honesty: a disposition that accommodates on the philosophical and epistemological plane both agnosticism and scepticism.

Non-religious identity was combined with scientific worldview, humanist, freethinker, sceptic and open worldview, once or twice with each. Atheist and non-religious were combined in three instances, making it the most popular combination. When I examined which identities did not combine with other identities, atheist was found as the sole identity tag in 15 cases, non-religious in 14, followed by sceptic (5), agnostic (3), freethinker (3) and secularist (3). The following identity tags did not appear alone in a single instance: naturalist, apatheist, materialist, pantheist and humanist. The fact that single humanist identities were not found at all further confirms the findings with affiliations: in this study, affiliation with Humanists is mostly a subsidiary rather than a primary or sole affiliation.

6.4 Sources of Inspiration

Where do the respondents, then, find inspiration for their stance? Perhaps the most unprecedented feature of the New Atheism is that atheistic literature sells.[388] It is therefore not surprising that many

[386] JK1023

[387] FP1002

[388] Taira 2012a: 1

respondents had been exposed to and been inspired by the prominent New Atheist authors. Even though in many cases the non-religious worldview was the end-result of independent pondering, or the default position that always felt natural, it is not that the New Atheist authors had gone unnoticed. Altogether 11 respondents[389] had read and been informed, and even inspired in their stance by contemporary popular atheism. Dawkins was the most popular: Harris, Hitchens and Dennett combined were mentioned less than Dawkins, which reflects the sales figures of these authors. Only one respondent proposed that there is nothing particularly new in these works.[390] Respondents who mentioned having found inspiration in older atheism were few: Nietzsche, d'Holbach and Marx were mentioned by one respondent each.[391] Epicurus, who would technically be apatheist rather than atheist, was mentioned by two respondents.[392] Other international non-religious publications were hardly mentioned at all: only one respondent mentioned having subscribed international non-religious magazines. The Finnish organisations' magazines, however, seemed to inspire many. As one respondent put it,

> Freethinkers' magazine writes about things, takes a stance. One can see how others who have a similar viewpoint think. Because I do not count much. It gives hope that there are others who think like this. Decreasing the feeling of loneliness, that is the reason. Because one feels quite alone.[393]

Other domestic sources of inspiration were the prominent Finnish non-religious spokespersons, Esko Valtaoja and Kari Enqvist.[394] If we add to this list the respondent who found inspiration in the slogan of the bus-campaign, we get 23 respondents who mentioned one or several sources of inspiration amongst the non-religious publications, public statements or lectures. Finland is quite a good place for a reader with non-religious interests: nearly all of the foreign authors and publications mentioned are translated into Finnish.

A notable minor strand of inspiration for some respondents were religious or religiously inspired texts. As one respondent put it,

> Myths are in themselves interesting stories, after all we are reading Kalevala in a Lutheran society, we know it is a myth. I read religious stories in the same way, Bhagavad-gita for instance is kind of an exciting book. No one needs to know religious texts better than an atheist, one must know what they say, one must know what one does not believe in.[395]

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[389] JK1002; JK1007; JK1025; JK1034; JK1041; JK1042; JK1059; PN1001; JK1008; JK1027; JK1043

[390] JK1060

[391] JK1037 (Nietzsche), 1060 (d'Holbach), JK1014 (Marx)

[392] JK1009 and JK1043; in the latter case, Epicurus was mentioned in passing, without any indication for personally felt inspiration by the respondent. The inspirational role of Epicurus became clear in an informal talk outside the interview, and I was later able to confirm it from public statements by the same respondent.

[393] JK1024

[394] JK1012; JK1016; JK1018; JK1034; JK1059; FP1005

[395] JK1059

In many cases the interest seemed to be of an academic kind rather than an actual religious or spiritual inspiration. Some respondents mentioned the importance of knowing their opponent. Pekka, for instance has read religious texts, and this is how he motivates it:

> ...know your enemy...in that sense also that if there...undoubtedly on the religious side that the level of argumentation, that it is on this other side sometimes quite bad...it brings mental satisfaction to catch others, for this kind of a mistake and interpretation...

He adds, however, that his interest for reading about religion is not only to challenge believers. It is also interesting to understand religion from an academic point of view.[396] Other respondents reverberated this theme in various ways.

For some, however, Buddhist texts, New Age, Kierkegaard and Krishnamurti seemed to have been genuine sources of inspiration, even though the respondents may have associated the texts as spiritual rather than religious.[397] One respondent explicitly stated that religion refers to Christianity or something else,

> …the type of religion that I am not interested in

whereas Buddhism, being closer to home, represents spirituality.[398] Some respondents recognised the value of the teachings of Jesus, due to exemplifying an early form of humanism and anti-capitalism.[399]

If Buddhism, a prominent world-religion, can be seen in non-religious terms, and if even Jesus can be detached from the religious framework by some, we need to ask: What do these people mean when they talk about religion? What does religion mean, when it is seen as problematic? And what kinds of attitudes are held towards religion? Let us now explore these questions.

6.5 Relationship to Religion

Only a few respondents claimed being brought up in a totally non-religious environment from the very beginning. Most had some engagement with religion, varying from vague childhood beliefs, or following social norms, to taking religion seriously, by being active in parish, or praying regularly. The American non-religious individuals in Zuckerman's study were more likely to speak about religion in strong negative terms, whereas Scandinavians were either neutral or slightly positive. To use

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[396] JK1014

[397] JK1023; JK1038; JK1039; JK 1051; JK1063

[398] JK1051

[399] JK1032; JK1018; JK1035

his metaphor: religion for the Scandinavians is like a cute and exotic tropical fish, whereas for the Americans, a malevolent shark.[400] Let us explore how the affiliated non-religious Finns fit into this.

I begin by considering *what* is rejected. Is the rejection focused on a particular kind of religiosity - a certain religious tradition like Islam, or a way of being religious like fundamentalism - or is it of a more general nature? I analysed the interviews looking for dispositions regarding religious pluralism, different traditions, and different ways of approaching and practicing religion.

6.5.1 National Expressions and World-Religions

The point of departure for this study is to view the respondents as part of a social movement, whose agenda includes not taking the Lutheran Church in Finland as an acceptable default position. Desire to change the society, either by limiting the religion's role in the public sphere in favour of scientific or rational explanations, or by changing religion's institutional monopoly regarding rites of passage, its role in education, in the military or in politics - these are all topics found in the web-pages of the Finnish non-religious organisations, and therefore one would expect to find something like that in the discourses of the affiliates. Some respondents, however, regarded the Finnish situation as relatively good.[401]

In some cases, individual respondents admitted being either members of the church or financially supporting some of its activities, such as the Finn Church Aid. In these cases, however, it became clear that the individuals did not personally believe in the teachings of the church, nor did they participate in its services.[402] This attitude resembles what Zuckerman found amongst secular Swedes and Danes. One might have expected a more critical outlook because the respondents are not like the regular non-religious. Rather, they are committed to their non-religion more than the average person due to their affiliation. Other than Finland, occasional positive references were made to America and France, due to the separation of the state and church, and to the Swedish liberal theology. More often, however, if national situations other than Finland were singled out, it was done on negative grounds.

Of all the nations, American religiosity was most often discussed in a negative light, in eight interviews.[403] As one respondent contrasted Finnish and American religiosity:

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[400] Zuckerman 2012a: 14

[401] Altogether five: JK1039, JK1059, JK1070, JK1014, JK1043. Some others discussed Finland in neutral terms, whereas no one referred to Finnish religiosity as more problematic than religiosity elsewhere.

[402] JK1014; JK1036

[403] JK1006; JK1014; JK1015; JK1027; JK1039; JK1043; JK1046; JK1059

> ...there is quite some difference...it is more affirming and agitating. They talk about Jesus, God and mercy. If one follows the Finnish practice, it is seldom that priests say anything about God or Jesus...it is probably because of this cultural difference that we have this state church, which is quite secular...I believe only a few theologians are enthusiastic about the American style of preaching.[404]

Compared to American fundamentalism, the situation in Finland is not only good - according to one respondent, it might very well be that the somewhat boring and dull, "hundred times diluted" state-supported Finnish church that follows the trends of the society may actually be the best pragmatic means toward a more secular society.[405] Except for the United States, some other countries were mentioned occasionally by one or two respondents. The only other nation that was mentioned several times was Iran (by four). In each case, however, Iran was mentioned in the context of pointing out problems with Islam, and it seems that the respondents considered Islam rather than Iran to be the real issue.

Of the world religions, Islam was mentioned most often as an example for a problematic religion: 13 respondents[406] named Islam, due to its being intolerant[407], proselytising[408] and violent[409], exemplified by terror-strikes, fatwas and stonings of women.[410]On the second place came the Catholic church (3)[411], criticised for its intolerance against contraception[412] and its historical role in European politics.[413] Taken together as a block, monotheistic or Abrahamic religions were addressed by four respondents, accused for limiting the freedom of expression[414], being vengeful[415] - and essentially false.[416] Of the prominent religious traditions, Buddhism was singled out in a negative light by one

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[404] JK1039; JK1070

[405] JK1014; JK1043

[406] JK1006; JK1018; JK1020; JK1024; JK1029; JK1032; JK1037; JK1047; JK1050; JK1065; JK1014; JK1043; JK1069

[407] JK1032

[408] JK1050

[409] JK1032; JK1065; JK1014; JK1069

[410] JK1065; JK1014; JK1069; JK1032

[411] JK1029; JK1043; JK1069

[412] JK1029

[413] JK1043 ; JK1069

[414] JK1029

[415] JK1059

[416] JK1025; JK1043

respondent,[417] whereas national minorities, Laestadionism and Jehova's witnesses, received negative attention by four and two[418] respectively.

These numbers may sound small. Religion in general, however, was seen as problematic more often than any particular form of religion: in 14 interviews most or all religions were regarded as undesirable in one way or another - e.g. due to the lack of morality, rationality or peacefulness.[419]

It is no less important to mention the notable exceptions. Four respondents had an overall positive attitude towards all religions. Buddhism was singled out as a positive alternative: as I have explained above, six respondents either self-identified as some sort of Buddhists, and/or appreciated its rationality, peacefulness, questioning spirit, and its tools for relieving suffering.[420] Attitudes towards Buddhism differ from attitudes towards Finnish folk-churches, which were seen as the least evil. The instances with Buddhism that I am talking about here are in contexts, where Buddhism is not seen as a lesser evil, but as inherently valuable.

We can see from the above that most often all religions were seen as problems. When examples were given about where religiosity has gone particularly wrong, Islam and American religiosity were the most prominent candidates. The instantiations overlap: One respondent considered all three and eight respondents considered two of the three as problematic. Altogether 23 respondents held either all religions, Islam or American religiosity as problematic.

It is interesting to see not only what forms of religion were named, but also the reasons for rejecting religion. The most common arguments for rejecting religion are - unsurprisingly - its incompatibility with science, its irrationality, and its ill effects on morality.

6.5.2 Reasons for Rejecting Religion

A recurring theme in the interviews was religion's role in the public sphere. Although many respondents considered the Finnish religiosity as relatively harmless, they nevertheless mostly favoured a more pronounced separation of church and state in Finland. The topic was discussed in the inter-

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[417] JK1018

[418] Laestadionism: JK1005, JK1015, JK1043 and JK1074; Jehova's witnesses: JK1028 and JK1065. JK1065 was talking about how religions in general are prone to violence, and to exemplify this, mentioned Jehova's witnesses. According to the respondent, in spite of not going to the army, Jehova's witnesses are preparing for the final battle of Armageddon. This was considered odd, and stood as an example of how even seemingly nonviolent religions are not like that underneath the surface.

[419] JK1006; JK1008; JK1015; JK1016; JK1017; JK1018; JK1035; JK1040; JK1047; JK1050; JK1059; JK1065; JK1072; FP1004

[420] JK1002 (self-identification), JK1023 (somewhat sensible), JK1032 (more nonviolent; no active proselytisation), JK1039 (offers tools for relieving suffering), JK1051 (self-identification, spirit of questioning and contesting), JK1053 (self-identification; analysis of the nature of existence)

views more than 90 times. Another recurring issue was the topic of equality: religion was seen as promoting inequality of genders and sexual orientations, and the special status of Lutheran Christianity in Finnish society, including economic benefits received in the form of the right to receive tax benefits from both members and registered companies, were looked upon critically. Inequality was brought up in the interviews altogether 30 times. Both of these issues are in line with the organisations' official programs, which often emphasise the rights of the non-religious individuals, and promote the equality of stances.

The question-set for the semi-structured interviews did not include questions about these topics. The respondents were encouraged to elaborate on their worldview freely, and according to personal preferences. Since these topics came repeatedly up without being instigated by pre-designed questions, it seems likely that if a topic would have relevance for the non-religious movement as a whole, it would make appearance in the interviews.

The three most popular reasons for rejecting religion were all addressed in the FQS statements. Religious views were seen in contradiction to science, and hence to be rejected. This category included many kinds of arguments that are well-known from the popular atheist literature: comparing gods to imaginary entities, rejecting miracles, and contrasting creationism with evolution. Religious views were also rejected due to their inherent irrationality, being the second most popular argument for non-religiousness: God's attributes, religious texts, or even the behaviour of the faithful were seen as irrational. The latter is related to the third major topic: the relationship between religion and morality. For many respondents it was not simply a matter of denying religion as a necessity for being moral. Many saw religion leading to an inferior morality.
Besides these three, other minor arguments were given. I will summarise the minor themes after elaborating on the three major ones first a little more.

Science: A topic that was directly addressed in the basic set of FQS statements was the relationship between science and religion. The FQS statement #70. (Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles) seemed to reflect well the opinions of the Finnish secularists. 50 respondents addressed the issue roughly like the FQS statement was formulated: religious views are rejected if they come directly in conflict with science, or indirectly, by rejecting faith in supernatural entities. Fifteen respondents contrasted religious claims with scientific evidence. The most extreme formulations rejected categorically all religious ideas as incompatible with science[421] and contrasted blind religious faith with scientific quest for truth.[422] Religious ideas that were in contra-

[421] JK1067

[422] JK1070

diction with science were viewed by one respondent as funny rather than dangerous.[423] Sixteen respondents compared belief in god(s) to beliefs in other imaginary entities.[424]

Other issues where religion was seen to clash with science were evolution vs creationism (10 respondents), miracles vs natural laws (7), the "God of gaps"-argument (3), and the gifts of technology-argument (3).[425] Six respondents regarded religious explanations as something belonging to the earlier phase of mankind - understandable, perhaps, when scientific explanations were not available, but no longer necessary. Five respondents mentioned explicitly that matter or natural processes are the basis of everything, offering a sufficient explanation for everything, whereas only one respondent said that there are views that fall outside the scope of science.[426]

Irrationality: Another popular issue was the irrationality of the religious claims: many religious claims seem to be in contradiction with each other, and thus subject to rejection, even without considering scientific evidence. Two FQS statements address this issue: #70. (Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles.) and #85. (Finds belief in a benevolent god difficult in the face of evil.). The topic of irrationality did come up in 42 interviews, of which the special case of theodicy was mentioned by thirteen respondents. Out of the 42, two held stances that differentiated them from the rest: According to one respondent, even if one disagrees with the religious point of view, it has to be respected if it is well argued.[427] Another respondent questioned the topic of theodicy. As an atheist, were he to give the God-hypothesis a consideration, he would find it odd to blame God for the problems of the world: evil is caused by men, world being the cause of its own problems.[428]

One additional respondent alluded directly to his own worldview as the default position, using the "burden of proof" argument. Even though this argument was not used explicitly, it was the default position in nearly all discussions about science versus religiosity. Only one of the respondents mentioned the deeper epistemological and ontological issues related to the comparative advantages or

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[423] JK1014

[424] Unsurprisingly, Santa Claus was the most popular example (6 respondents), other examples being hobgoblins, ghosts, elves and the Loch Ness monster.

[425] The idea is from Richard Dawkins (1995: 35) who wrote: "Show me a cultural relativist at thirty thousand feet and I'll show you a hypocrite ... If you are flying to an international congress of anthropologists or literary critics, the reason you will probably get there - the reason you do not plummet into a ploughed field - is that a lot of Western scientifically trained engineers have got their sums right." The criticism is directed towards cultural relativism, not religion, but in the interviews it was reformulated into targeting religion.

[426] JK1053

[427] JK1063

[428] JK1022

disadvantages of the scientific or religious stances, and found there are limits to the scientific explanations.[429]

All in all, 40 respondents rejected a religious stance on the basis of its irrationality. Nine were happy to just note the irrationality of religion, without giving examples. Whereas one respondent considered religious dogma to be even more irrational than communist dogma,[430] another one regarded religious belief to be just as irrational as investing money on a pyramid scheme.[431] Some, however, elaborated more on their stance: five respondents found particular problems with the idea of God, God's behaviour or God's attributes. Four respondents saw religious texts as possessing internal contradictions. Particularly puzzling seemed to be the fact that sometimes educated and intelligent people engage in religion. Five respondents were wondering how educated scientists sometimes fall victim to religious beliefs. One respondent called it the "Kierkegaardian leap", where the person has faith even though it makes no sense.[432] Even science itself was seen as tinged with irrationality, if it was religiously motivated.[433]

Intellectual and doctrinal issues aside, the behaviour of religious people was often seen as problematic. Seven respondents found the behaviour of religious people to be irrational. Examples of this would be faith-healing, accumulation of wealth despite the Christian message of caring for one's neighbours, not acting in accordance with one's professed religious ideals, and of course the irrationality of the belief of being able to sin as much as one wants, since the salvation is guaranteed by faith. These instances bring us to the last major issue about morality.

Morality: Many respondents were keenly aware of the fact that non-religious people are sometimes accused of lacking in morality. 55 respondents rejected the idea that religion would be necessary for morality, or considered religious people as more hypocritical than others. Proposed alternative moral systems were secular humanism, UN declaration of human rights, and the prevailing legal system. Many respondents considered morality to be a natural product of evolution, the innate feelings of compassion and empathy requiring no religious superstructure.

However, for the purposes of this study a more interesting stance was to reject religion on the basis of its deteriorating effect on morality: 23 respondents saw religion as correlating with or causing lower morality or hypocrisy. As one respondent put it, "Everything is allowed and then God for-

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[429] JK1053

[430] JK1043

[431] JK1068

[432] JK1023

[433] JK1037; JK1050

gives once a week."[434] Non-religiousness, on the contrary, leads to a higher morality, as one has to act morally without the possibility of being forgiven by divine powers.

Religion was also seen as justifying immoral acts. Four respondents argued that religious injunctions are outdated, thus leading people to behave against current moral norms. Likewise, four respondents found religious injunctions either directly encouraging violent and self-centred behaviour, or allowing people to justify their self-centred behaviour - even wars.

> In a normal situation, good people do good and bad people do bad, but religion makes it possible that even good people can act in an evil way and feel good about it.[435]

In quite a few occasions - 18 - religion was correlated with violence, or it was held to be directly dangerous.

Whereas seven respondents did not find religious people more hypocritical than others, eleven respondents connected religion to hypocrisy. Examples ranged from personal experiences to public scandals, the latter probably related to media attention towards sexual abuses in a minor Christian denomination in Finland.

Not all respondents, however, held critical views: Five respondents would grant that even religious people are capable of moral action. One of them, despite identifying as an atheist, went as far as to conclude that the more visible role of religion in the past actually helped people develop their moral reflection.[436]

Science, irrationality and inferior morality were the most prominent reasons for rejecting religion. This should not, however, blind us to the fact that there were many more reasons that came up in the interviews. Thus, I will summarise some of these reasons.

Other Arguments: Religion was seen by many respondents as a sign of psychological laziness or seeking an easy solution. This is related to its appeal to authority, which seems to directly contradict the priority placed on independence that has been observed amongst non-religious individuals.[437] Other, more polemic formulations were to equate being religious with spiritual infancy, being insane, or being under the influence of intoxication. These arguments could be combined under a common umbrella, where the common theme is to describe the religious person in derogatory terms, such as comparing religiosity to infancy or to weakness of character. Related to this is the idea that religion would correlate with judgmental attitudes and intolerance.

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[434] JK1015

[435] JK1042

[436] JK1063

[437] Pasquale 2007b: 50; Farias 2013: 475; O'Connell Killen 2007: 74

The adverse social dynamics and effects of religion were also often recognised. Religion was seen as a tool for ruling and expressing power over the faithful. Religionists were also considered eager to influence the lives of those not amongst their ranks. Proselytisation was also considered a problem.

6.5.3 Positive Religion

Despite the reasons for rejecting religion in their personal life, an overwhelming majority of the respondents were prepared to respect the freedom of religion of others. Indeed, the issue of reducing religion's influence in the public sphere went hand in hand with respecting everyone's right for a personal stance. Despite participating in a social movement whose goal is to promote change in the society into a more secular direction, in their private lives the respondents usually found no problem interacting with religious people - in some cases by dating or by being married to one. Or they were just totally indifferent to religious matters in their private life. To exemplify this attitude, consider Harri, who does not even know if his wife believes in God or not:

> I do not think it is important to ask about others' beliefs, I do not even know if my wife believes in God, I suppose not, I think to pose such a question is artificial.[438]

Not only that, religion was viewed as partially positive - at least for those who found solace in it. Less than half of the respondents - 33 - discussed religion in predominantly critical terms. 16 respondents regarded religion mainly in positive light and additionally 28 respondents were neutral or ambivalent. To exemplify the differences between the stances, I quote three respondents.

The first one, Leif, a retired man who is active in politics, ponders over morality and concludes:

> ...believers have a prerogative, they can do any amount of evil if they just remember ask God for forgiveness in the evening. I and other non-believers have to live in such a way that we do not have to ask for forgiveness. Non-religion prevents evil acts in the world.[439]

His viewpoint is shared by many others, but not by everyone. Sanna exemplifies ambivalence. She is a young adult who grew up in a religious home, but in her later teenage years developed an interest for Freethinkers. She feels some sadness for her loss of faith, and values religion's ability to connect people:

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[438] FP1002

[439] JK1009

> I do not think there is, the secular worldview does not actually connect people to the extent that some, some more religious outlook can.[440]

Yet she adds that on the institutional level, differences between religious views create unnecessary friction.

> In my opinion unnecessary quarrelling is so, at least is born out of precisely these religious views.[441]

Sanna was not alone in discussing the pros and cons of religion. Many respondents appreciated religious monuments, the solace that religion can provide for the believers, or the philanthropic work done by believers or churches; yet in the same interview they might criticise religious discrimination, judgmental attitudes and the like. Other respondents, however, had very little or nothing negative to say about religion, and some were overwhelmingly appreciative. Take Tuija for instance. She has identified herself as an atheist for a long time and currently teaches religion. Unlike Leif, who saw religion leading to inferior ethical behaviour, she thinks religion is an important part of human history. She goes as far as to consider those who are not able to appreciate its historical value to live in illusion. She particularly laments the loss of common basis for morality that was previously provided by religion. Tuija adds that she respects everyone's stance, including those that differ from her own, if they are thoughtfully argued.[442]

And some respondents took it even further, by financially supporting or even actively engaging in certain activities of some religious organisations, by being a member of the church whose teachings they did not accept - and in some cases by subscribing to a religious worldview – which, however, in none of the cases was anywhere near a monotheistic one.

6.6 Experiences with Religion

Based on the above discussion, it is clear that the respondents of this study view some manifestations of religion as particularly problematic, whereas other aspects are neutral, and even acceptable. But non-religion is not only a matter of listing beliefs and attitudes. Worldviews are systems of assigning meanings, and what is meaningful is often infused with emotions. I will now consider the respondents' emotional responses towards religion, something that has so far received relatively little scholarly attention. William James's (1929) study of the variety of religious experiences has so far no non-religious counterpart that would hold a similar status as a classic, even though studies

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[440] JK1008; Nynäs, Lassander & Kontala 2013: 469-470

[441] JK1008

[442] JK1063

have been made to map the different non-religious dispositions and experiences in various ways.[443] Steven Bullivant's (2008) article on irreligious experiences is particularly interesting: contrary to the common perception in popular discourse where religiousness is associated with emotionalism and non-religiousness with intellectualism, Bullivant introduces case studies of people reporting strong experiences when they are turning away from religion. Mostly feeling elated, but in one case also scared and lonely, people in Bullivant's study are anything but void of emotional content with their experiences of non-existence of God, and irrelevance or falsity of religion.[444]

Aside from characterising the respondents of this study as a group, this investigation contributes to the understanding of how people who reject religion respond emotionally to the various aspects of religion. Do all aspects of religion evoke emotions, or is it only religious dogma or institutions that evoke feelings? Do religions annoy the non-religious individuals, or are they experienced neutrally, perhaps even as sources of inspiration? How do these feelings translate into the social life, and how are the various emotions dealt with or monitored? To answer these questions, I present the various emotional responses found in the study, giving examples of the more prominent ones. They have been chosen to illustrate the variety of the emotional responses involved in the study. I also present the ramifications of these emotions, according to how the respondents are discussing their own responses to these experiences.

It is important to note the whole range of feelings and emotions that are evoked by religion in its various expressions - be it religious experiences, art, proselytisation, politics, ideas or the behaviour of the faithful. From the interview analyses done so far, we have already seen a variety of dispositions towards religion, including negative, positive and mixed. Even though many respondents said that religion does not matter to them personally, some were more ambivalent towards religious life. For instance, taking a stance against the role of the Lutheran church in Finland does not necessarily mean taking a distance to all religions. As I have shown above, antagonism towards some religious expressions could go hand in hand with sympathies towards other expressions. A typical example would be taking a critical view towards a religious doctrine (i.e. God's existence), while at the same time appreciating religious art or religiously motivated social work.

A number of the respondents did nevertheless express emotions with a clear negative tone, as would be expected from non-religious affiliates. Let us look more closely into the various emotional dispositions - the various roles they play in the respondents' personal and social lives, and how these feelings are monitored or give impetus to certain kinds of action.

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[443] E.g. Pasquale 2007b; Schnell and Keenan 2011; Cotter 2011

[444] Bullivant 2008

Rejection - from Annoyed to Fearful: From the well-known wish by Jean Meslier,[445] that the nobility be strangled with the guts of the priests, to the more recent statements by prominent New Atheist authors about the problems of religion in the public sphere,[446] a critical tone, at times aggressively so, continues to be part of non-religious declarations. In Finland this can be noted in the fact that several of the organisations openly declare the diminishing of the dominant religious tradition's role in public life to be amongst their goals. One is tempted to assume that the emotional underpinnings of those participating in some way in these organisations would be characterised by the rage à la Meslier. In some cases, there is some truth to this, as we will see. Considering the nature of the official programs of the organisations, it comes as no surprise that a number of expressions of irritation and dissatisfaction could be found in the interview material. The impetuses for such irritation were many. Sometimes, a strong personal experience of oppression could follow throughout the whole life:

> Once on the way home from Sunday school the pastor started calling me and my brothers evildoers. We were amongst the poorest in the neighbourhood, he forced us to walk through the snow to a stone to pray God for forgiveness for the evil we had done...that has followed me through out my life.[447]

More often, however, a perceived wrong in religion's role in society or politics would be a sufficient impetus. Jaana describes herself as having always been an atheist, but with a largely neutral disposition towards religion. After reading a book by Richard Dawkins, however, she started to feel resentment that lead to becoming active in a non-religious organisation:

> After reading it [the book by Dawkins] I got interested. Until then I belonged to church and held a neutral disposition. It [the book] made me feel resentment towards religious societies and all the evil done in the name of religion...I have joined the Freethinkers because I am frustrated...not about the beliefs of others, since I do not want to get involved in that, but state church as an organisation is really annoying. The fact that the state recognises one church as a state church has inspired me to participate in the Freethinkers.[448]

For Jaana, a personal feeling of resentment has become an impetus for taking action by participating and actively promoting a change in society. But sometimes holding a worldview different from the majority of the people may lead to feelings of being different or lonely. Finding likeminded company can be a powerful motive for affiliation.

Like Jaana, Jani is also annoyed by people acting unscrupulously in the name of religion. Growing up in a religious family provided him with a box-seat to see what he describes as hypocrisy and cheating.

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[445] Meslier 1864: 19

[446] e.g. Harris 2006: x–xi; Stenger 2009: 53–57

[447] JK1009

[448] JK1007

> Sometimes my father asked me to return the empty liquor bottles in the shop in the neighbouring town, so that nobody in our village would know about it.[449]

The combination of the national identity with religion seems to be particularly frightening:

> Religiosity and nationalism are similar in my view. Someone takes God, another takes the nation, and for their sake they are ready for horrible acts.[450]

Feeling alienated from the people surrounding him and alone with his views, affiliation with Freethinkers provides support:

> [Freethinker's] magazine deals with issues and takes a stand. It allows one to see that others think likewise in a similar way...it raises the spirits to see that there are others who think in this way. Mitigates the feeling of being alone...[451]

These examples show how the effects of religion act as impetuses for resentment, which may lead to seeking likeminded association, even social action, often by becoming affiliated in a non-religious organisation. Of course, sometimes merely the perceived falsity or irrationality of religious beliefs is a sufficient impetus for irritation. As Pasi put it,

> One of the most annoying things is...the assumption, when the faithful think that morality comes from god and religion, since then conversely, it implies that people who do not get it from God...would be immoral[452]

Besides causing resentment and frustration, religion may also be outright scary. Whereas Jussi finds religion to be scary without specifying why,[453] for Anna, the fact that people found their morality and ethics in a literal reading of the Bible and Q'uran causes fear:

> There are good passages but some are totally, inconceivably cruel...which according to today's moral sense are completely insane. For instance if you read the Bible literally, people should be stoned to death if they work on Sunday...killing someone for working on Sunday does not sound very moral...Someone wrote that normally, good people do good and bad people do evil, but religion enables good people to do evil and feel good about it. This thought is a little scary.[454]

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449 JK1024

450 JK1024

451 JK1024

452 JK1046

453 FP1005

454 JK1042

The scope of negative feelings when confronted with religion is larger than these examples show. Milder variants include feeling intimidated by religion,[455] seeing religion as burdensome and a waste of time,[456] or feeling sad that religious people see atheism as a common enemy.[457] A peculiar kind of negativity is feeling amused about the behaviour or the beliefs of the faithful, the latter emotion not being negative per se but combined with other experiences with religion; as for instance with Eeva who champions her children's right to be free from religious influences in their school, becomes part of an ambivalent mixture of feelings towards religion, where in the context of the interview the negative seems to outweigh the positive.[458]

These examples help us to understand how negative feelings towards religion can instigate social engagement by seeking likeminded association. In the respondents' accounts, these feelings can also be instrumental in becoming actively involved in voluntary work for promoting the values considered as important, such as independence of thought, and particularly the equality of stances in the society, with the special application of diminishing the role of the dominant churches in Finnish society.

Positive Emotions: For many respondents, the various aspects of religion, be it art, morality, social work - or even religious experiences - evoke positive feelings. Consider Jouni, who had religious experiences in his adolescence, but later on came to reject religious doctrines. Despite this, powerful spiritual experiences continue to be part of his inner life:

> I've had experiences of divine presence. I still have similar experiences, without having a secular name for them. These experiences are moving, characterised by oneness, synergy, beauty and inspiration. These are the greatest experiences of life, something I hope others could have as well. Through them I have realised that moral and compassion can arise spontaneously, without rules.

In tune with this, he regularly engages in practices meant to bring about a feeling of inner peace and connection, as he describes it.[459]

Rejection of the dominant form of Finnish religiosity does not necessarily entail rejection of all religions. While Simo finds inspiration in Buddhist literature, Kari describes himself as post-Buddhist, freethinker and a rational pantheist.[460] Religion can also provide inspiration as a powerful cultural force. Pirjo, an atheist, not only respects the religious rituals, but deeply appreciates the faith of others. Not only that, she loves to listen to church-music.

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[455] e.g. JK1006

[456] FP1003

[457] JK1017

[458] JK1072; the same kind of disposition is found in JK1006

[459] JK1002

[460] JK1051 and JK1053

> [The music] is so beautiful and warm...so great. And people who observe, they are joyful...it is their religion, it is beautiful. Beautiful...I listen to the orthodox, that is my music[461]

Or consider Raija, who likes to sing psalms, collects religious art, reads scriptures and paints icons. Clearly, as a cultural expression religion has great value, yet as a worldview, it holds no appeal to her:

> I kind of regard religiosity as a mental disorder. I cannot understand why sane people people believe in God.[462]

More material could have been presented, but I hope this sample gives some idea about the variety involved. The examples serve to illustrate the variety of feelings and experiences related to religion, how they act as impetuses for action, and how these feelings are dealt with. On the one hand religion can be a positive force for some. Religious experiences, even though interpreted through a non-religious framework, can hold a central value in a person's life, like for Jouni. Positive experiences are seen as nourishing and meaningful, and in such cases those who experience them will engage in activities that are intended to strengthen such feelings. By engaging in meditational practices, participating in concerts with religious music or reading religious literature, such activities can be deeply meaningful, even though the associated beliefs are not.

On the other hand, religion does indeed evoke negative feelings: for some, religion is a frightening or irritating phenomenon, which gives impetus for seeking likeminded irreligious[463] company, and which can lead to societal action. Interestingly, the division is not clear cut. Whereas all the respondents of this study took some form of distance to at least the dominant form of religion in Finland, and in many cases to religions in plural, it would be too one-sided a generalisation to consider that non-religious affiliation automatically involves a markedly negative emotional disposition. I hope these examples are sufficient to show just that. Many respondents seemed to have mixed feelings towards religion, liking some aspects and being irritated or fearful about others. For some, the positive clearly outweighed the negative.

Furthermore, these examples give an interesting hint for further research. As Ariela Keysar and Barry Kosmin suggest[464], instead of using the binary division secular-religious it may be more fruitful to examine an individual's non/religiosity along at least three dimensions of Belonging, Belief and Behaviour. An individual may be a member of a religious organisation while rejecting its central

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[461] JK1058

[462] JK1062

[463] I am using *irreligious* instead of *non-religious*, due to the predominant religion-rejecting mood. Motivation can be found in the section about terminology.

[464] Keysar and Kosmin 2007: 17-18

beliefs. Likewise, participation in religious services and being married to a religious person does not require subscribing to the belief system. Teemu Taira suggests that besides these, in Finland it is necessary to consider both attitudes and self-identifications.[465] This complexity is visible amongst the Finnish non-religious individuals of this study. While membership in a religious organisation is rare,[466] occasional participation in religious services is not; whereas the basic theistic doctrines are usually rejected either moderately or strongly, openness to some features of religious teachings is not at all uncommon. Furthermore, lack of theistic beliefs does not always translate into identifying as an atheist. At times, the major form of Christianity in Finland is rejected, whereas another religious tradition is embraced. The picture is considerably more complex than a simple like-dislike bipolarity.

Unsurprisingly, the dominant emotional response was a negative one. Self-described feelings of resentment, even fear were not uncommon. However, unlike one might expect from non-religious affiliates, where non-religiosity clearly involves more than mere disinterest in religion, these negative emotions were balanced by some positive emotional responses towards religion. In many cases, the emotional "status" of an individual was anything but simple: annoyed or critical about some aspects of religion, while at the same time appreciating other aspects. Furthermore, these emotions were not merely internal states. Often they corresponded with or motivated practical action. Seeking social support in a society where religiosity seems to be the norm, or taking action to change the society towards equality of stances are some examples of how negative feelings act as impetuses for action. Participating in religious concerts, reading religious literature and engaging in practices to induce religious experiences, on the other hand, are examples of activities fuelled by positive experiences with religion. Combined, these observations support sociologist Colin Campbell's suggestion that irreligious experiences vary probably just as much as religious experiences.[467] The observations go beyond questioning popular accusations against non-religious activists as "angry" atheists; by informing us about the variety of feelings toward religion, they motivate further study for arriving at useful typologies.

That is precisely the aim of having the respondents engage with FQS to examine both the common ground and the variety in the respondents' worldviews.

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[465] Taira 2014: 239-252. Attitudes are meant to complement the data about beliefs. Relevant questions are how important God/religion is for someone, or what one's attitude towards atheism is like. Behaviour can be divided into collective participation and private practices. Identifications can range from very religious to outspoken atheist. Atheist self-identification is in Finland less popular than lack of belief in God. Statistics about belonging to a religious organisation can be further complemented by studying the attitudes along four sub-topics: attitudes towards the dominant churches in Finland and other religions, trust in church and church's ability to provide relevant answers, and reasons for affiliation with church.

[466] Three participants reported membership in a religious organisation.

[467] Campbell 1971: 127

7. COMMONALITY AND VARIATION IN NON-RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEWS

In Faith Q-sort, the whole configuration of all items sorted by the respondent and their interrelationships will be used for assessing the viewpoint, not just isolated items. The analysis of worldview prototypes consists of two phases. In the first one, a solution with a specific number of factors needs to be determined. In the second one, the chosen solution must be interpreted. The factors, or worldview prototypes, express shared viewpoints, and the interpretation must do justice to these viewpoints. This means that the interpretation needs to proceed as much as possible from the factors themselves rather than from an external frame of reference. An important feature of factor interpretation is, however, comparing the factors or prototypes with one another. When this is done, it becomes meaningful to talk about differentiation, which is based on factual differences between the factors (or worldview prototypes). Thus, I will begin by explicating the factor analysis, and then move on to the factor interpretation.

7.1 Factor Analysis

The analysis in this study was done using a free software by Peter Schmoltz, PQMethod for Mac, version 220.[468] The option 'Principal Component Analysis' was used for the sake of consistency with the other analyses done in the larger research project, Viewpoints to the World, and to minimise importing external categories into the procedure.

In the analytic process, two steps precede the choosing of the number of factors to be rotated. A correlation matrix that shows how every sort correlates with every other sort is created first. The correlation matrix is then used to extract an unrotated factor matrix. At this stage the loadings of the Q-sorts with the unrotated factors are minimal. Therefore, a rotation of factors is performed to increase the correlation of the existing sorts with the factors. After these steps, the number of rotated factors needs to be established. Using various analytic criteria such as eigenvalues, scree-test and Humphrey's rule, the number of factors to be rotated is chosen. Rotation of the factors gives greater focus on the particularities of the shared viewpoints found in the study.

[468] http://schmolck.userweb.mwn.de/qmethod/

For defining the prototypes, persons need to be associated with them. I have used the recommended procedure of associating only sorts with significant loadings with a prototype. I have furthermore refrained from associating a person with a prototype, if the person has loaded significantly on more than one prototype. Hence, a prototype is defined by those persons being significantly associated with *only* one particular prototype. Other sorts are excluded from defining the prototype. In many cases the distinction is clear, but there is unavoidably some arbitrariness involved. It is possible to manually mark some sorts as significant even though the particular similarity might be less than what is used as a general criterion. For instance, if it was maintained that the similarity must be 50% or more, and a person would load with 40% with the prototype, but with less than 20% with other prototypes, the sort could be manually marked as defining the prototype. PQMethod marks the defining sorts by automatically providing flags that mark those sorts, and after investigation it seemed there were no individuals left to add flags with any meaningful criteria. Consequently, manually adding flags is a feature not used in this study.

In this study, I experimented with solutions ranging from two to eight factors; whereas the two-factor-solution did not show much differentiation between the emerging viewpoints, the eight-factor-solution gave viewpoints which were not significantly associated with any respondents. I finally chose a three-factor-solution, since it satisfied the standard factor-analytic criteria, allowed a large number of respondents to be associated with the prototypes and at the same time provided a basis for discerning differentiation. I explicate these steps in detail below.

The first extraction produced 11 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0; the first one had 42.4018, the second 2.6032, third 1.929, fourth 1.6756, fifth 1.5883, sixth 1.4841. seventh 1.3313, eighth 1.2591, ninth 1.1265, tenth 1.0802 and eleventh 1.0279. The next step was to decide the number of factors chosen for rotation. The maximum number of factors that PQMethod allows is eight. I started with the eight-factor solution, and experimented with all solutions from eight to two factors.

Eight Factors: The eight-factor solution produced three factors with only one defining sort, one with two defining sorts, one with three defining sorts and three with four defining sorts. In this solution, only 20 sorts out of 77 correlated strongly with one of the factors. I considered this solution unsatisfying for two reasons.

First, many factors were associated with only a few respondents. Investigating such factors would be interesting particularly if these would be associated with people in influential positions: managers, authors, politicians and the like. An example would be a Q-investigation about the preferred way of solving interpersonal disputes at a workplace. It would make sense to focus on a factor defined by only one sort, if that sort was done by the person in the position of managerial authority, and thus able to exert a disproportionately large influence. In such a case, the one opinion would

probably weigh in the practical working milieu as much or even more than the other opinions. This is, however, not the case in the present study. None of the respondents held a public profile to the extent of being able to dictate what non-religion ought to mean in Finland.

Second, 57 sorts (74% of all sorts) were not associated with any factor. For these reasons I rejected the eight-factor solution, and continued the investigation with the other solutions.

Seven Factors: I next investigated a seven-factor solution. Here, what emerged was two factors with one defining sort and two with two defining sorts, one with four sorts and two with five sorts. In terms of the number of defining sorts per factor, this solution does not look significantly better than the previous one. And like with the previous solution, again only 20 out of 77 defined one of the factors, leaving the remaining 57 respondents out. I continued the investigation with other solutions.

Six and Five Factors: A six-factor solution produced one factor with one defining sort, four with three, and one with eight defining sorts. Now shared viewpoints started to emerge. Yet regarding inclusiveness, the improvement was only marginal: 21 sorts defined one factor, 56 did not. I tried a five-factor solution, which for the first time did not produce any factors with only one defining sort: two factors were defined by three, one by four and two by five sorts. 21 sorts were associated strongly with one factor, and like with the six-factor solution, 56 were not. The solutions from five to eight factors, hence, shared the problem of leaving most of the sorts out of the picture. The remaining three solutions looked much better in this regard.

Four and Three Factors: A four-factor solution further increased the number of sorts defining one factor: one factor was defined by four sorts, one by eight, one by nine and one by 13. 34 sorts were associated with one factor, whereas 43 were not. At this point, the solution is for the first time approaching a point where the solution would explain half of the variance.

A three-factor solution again increased the number of sorts defining one factor: one factor was defined by 11 sorts, another by 16 and the largest one by 20. 47 sorts - 61% - are thus associated with one factor in this solution.

Two Factors: A two-factor solution finally had all but one sorts define one of the factors; the first factor was defined by 45 and the second by 31 sorts. This may sound good until we examine the factor arrays more closely. The commonality between the factors turned out to be notable. When I examined both factor arrays, I found out that only two of the 101 items had a column loading difference of three columns between the factors. All the other items' difference between the factors was at most 2, but often 1 or 0 columns. This indicates an overall agreement between the sorts. This solution would, hence, effectively explain the common ground, but hardly any differentiation.

The initial experimentation with the solutions led me to consider the three and four factor solutions as the most interesting. Now I wanted to see how the standard factor analytical criteria would work with these solutions.

Applying Factor Analytical Criteria to the Solutions: Only two factors satisfy the criterion called Humphrey's rule, where the cross-product of the two most significant sort loadings must exceed the standard error twice. A third factor, however, is close to satisfying Humphrey's criterion, the cross-product of the two most significant loadings being 0.193 (SE x 2 = 0.199), whereas a fourth factor has a cross-product on 0.177. After that, the cross-products drop somewhat (0.14, 0.131, 0.122). Three factors almost satisfy this criterion, and a liberal application would suggest even a four-factor solution as acceptable.

Applying the scree test, it turns out that since the first unrotated factor has a large eigenvalue (42.4018), the next largest being notably smaller (2.6032), the slope change is located between factors two and three. The curve flattens after the third factor, resembling almost a straight line from the third to the eight factor. The scree test, then, lends support to considering two- and three-factor solutions. As already mentioned, a two-factor solution produces factors that do not significantly differ from one another, and therefore scree test would point to a three-factor solution.

Based on these considerations, I chose the three-factor solution. It explains 61% of the total variance. To rotate the factors, I used the automated feature of PQMethod, refraining from manual rotations. The automated rotation yielded a factor array and other data to be used as a basis for interpretation. The factor array consists of the 101 statements with corresponding column values assigned by each prototype. It is enclosed in Appendix C.

Interpreting the Worldview Prototypes: PQMethod provides a wealth of information for factor interpretation, allowing both investigating the internal rang-ordering of items for one prototype, as well as comparing the prototypes with each other by item. PQMethod also automatically lists those items that define a prototype - items with loadings notably different from the other prototypes. I have mentioned the factor array, where items are assigned values from -4 to +4, according to the viewpoints. PQMethod also provides z-scores for each item by prototype,[469] which allow comparisons between items within the same category. Whereas the factor array tells which five items fall within the +4 or -4 columns, z-scores allow for differentiating the rang-ordering within the column. Such intra-column comparisons are not part of the sorting procedure, as the respondents are simply asked to place items in a column without internal rang-order. On the prototype level, however, z-scores can sometimes be revealing. A particular statement may stand out more than others in a column, by having a considerably lower or higher z-score than the other statements. It is even possible

[469] PQMethod presents these in the final output under the heading 'Factor Scores'

for two statements to have exactly same z-score, yet end up in different columns due to the constraints of the arrays.[470]

These features can be used to capture the most salient features of a prototype: it is easy to see the statements that evoke the strongest opinions in favour or against the viewpoint expressed by the item. These are the items placed in the positive and negative ends of the sorting board, and the prototype gives an estimated array with item loadings that is based on shared patterns within the actual sorts. PQMethod also automatically lists those statements that define a prototype: statements that make one prototype stand out when compared to the other prototypes. These may not always be the most agreeable or disagreeable ones. Let us say two prototypes strongly disagree with belief in a personal God, indicated by column -4 in the array. If a third prototype evaluates the same statement in the neutral or ambivalent middle ground, in columns -1 or 0, we might want to explore further, whence the difference. In the context of non-religion, neutrality instead of pronounced disagreement about theistic beliefs would certainly stand out and require explanation. Indeed, in such a context, even placing the statement in the column -2 might motivate a closer look, and neutrality would certainly have to be considered as telling us something important about this worldview prototype. This brief and hypothetical example can illustrate that factor interpretation requires more than a straightforward listing of items with strongest agreement and disagreement, even though such a short-cut might already be informative. A more in-depth investigation requires the Q-scholar to use all the available information, including interviews, to arrive at a comprehensive description. The end result is, hence, a combination of using both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

To ensure that as much as possible of the information provided by PQMethod would influence the interpretation, I added interpretative techniques to the automated features of PQMethod. One such strategy is Crib Sheet. Developed by Simon Watts, the method can aid focusing attention to potentially interesting statements, which may not be contained in the categories that signify strong agreement or disagreement - the columns +3, +4, -3 and -4. This additional strategy helps the researcher avoid missing important information. Here, some further categories emerge: items that are consistently sorted more positively than in the other prototypes and items that are sorted more negatively than in the other prototypes, even when such items are not sorted in the most agreeable or disagreeable columns. The number of these additional statements usually exceeds the number of the distinguishing statements provided by the PQMethod, and hence provides a more comprehensive basis for capturing the whole viewpoint.[471] I used another additional strategy, which is a speciality that is easily applicable to a three-prototype solution. I created an additional category of in-between items. These are the statements which differentiate one prototype from the two others by being scored lower than one and higher than another.

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[470] Terho 2013: 68-69. In his analysis, Johan Terho found out how two items had exactly the same z-score, whereas due to the constraints of the factor array, only one would fit into the category with -4, indicating least agreement. Utilising z-scores Terho was able to conclude that in this particular case, the forced five-item column would have to be expanded to six items.

[471] Watts and Stenner 2012: 147-165

Before delving into the specifics of the three prototypes, we need to understand the common ground shared across the prototypes. After all, both the programs of the organisations, and the interviews as introduced in the previous chapter indicate that the respondents do share some common ground. To use Underhill's scheme of concentric circles, the whole study is about a cultural mindset of differentiation from religion in Finland. Within that cultural mindset we need to know the preferences that define the respondents as a group, as well as internal differentiation. Let us see what kinds of viewpoints are shared by the prototypes. In order to ensure the discussion is more in tune with the proposed vocabulary in the chapter on worldview theory, and following David Wulff's terminology, I henceforth call the emerging factors worldview prototypes, or just prototypes.

7.2 Common Ground Shared by the Prototypes

By investigating the factor arrays, the common ground shared by all prototypes could be divided into three distinct domains: alienation from religion, secular humanism and experiential dimension. I will elaborate on each, based on the items in the positive and negative ends of the factor arrays. The statements will be referred to with item-numbers provided in brackets, followed by the number indicating the score in the factor array. When I present the common ground for all prototypes, I provide the scores for all prototypes, the first number representing prototype one and the last one standing for the third prototype. I will present the prototypes separately right after.

Alienation from traditional religion. As already indicated by the interviews, the Finnish affiliated non-religious individuals do not feel at home with traditional religiosity. This is evidenced by the statements placed at the negative end of the board, indicating disagreement. All three prototypes do not identify with any holy figure, human or divine (#66; -2 -1 -2). Unsurprisingly, personal God is rejected: they do not serve (#36, -4 -4 -4), turn to (#46, -2 -2 -2), or believe in (#53, -3 -2 -3) a personal God. One respondent elaborated on it in the following manner:

> Some time ago when we discussed with some friends, I just noted that I do not think that I have had in my life even the faintest religious experience. So, perhaps the area where that illusion is born is missing in my brain. Well, I firmly believe that the fact that I have to have something differently from a strongly religious person, just something, or simply a chemical-biological difference because, because some idea, some such intuition about that something like that could be possible...I do not have that sense at all, it is an altogether ab surd idea.[472]

[472] JK1046

It is likewise no surprise that religious ideas that conflict with scientific principles or rationality are rejected (#70, +2 +2 +3) : there is neither anticipation of a life hereafter (#52, -3 -1 -4) , salvation (#38, -3 -2 -3) nor hell for heretics and criminals (#99, -2 -4 -3). Religious content is seen as mythic and metaphoric (#87, +2 +3 +3) , religion itself being the illusory creation of human fears and desires (#60, +2 +3 +4). Hypocrisy is considered to be common in religious circles (#101, +2 +3 +3). Some respondents, however, pointed out that hypocrisy is not the prerogative of only religious people:

> I would say that in many secular worldview communities it is the same thing...I would not underline specifically religiosity.[473]

The non-religiousness of these respondents is not a simple rejection of something; rather, a disposition of clear secular humanistic characteristics could be discerned, which will be outlined next.

Secular humanistic disposition. Even though atheism, scepticism, secular humanism and the like focus on different features of non-religion and can be analytically separated for theoretical reflections, practically these dispositions nevertheless often overlap within a personal worldview. As a matter of preference, one person may emphasise atheism over humanism, whereas another one may have it the other way round: humanism or agnosticism is preferred over explicit atheism.[474] With the respondents of this study, the negative common ground, which is dominated by rejection of divinity and its associated doctrines, is combined with shared support for secular humanistic ideals, characterised by the following FQS statements that were placed at the positive end:

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[473] JK1053

[474] Many Finns who say they do not believe in God nevertheless do not identify themselves as atheists: According to Taira (2014), in 2011, 21% did not believe in God, whereas 13% identified as atheists. This is the highest percentage of atheist identification ever, probably due to the fact that multiple choices were allowed. Previous to this, percentages as low as 3% have been found, whereas at the same time the percentage of those who do not believe in God have been higher. Eller (2010) has claimed that secular humanism is a natural concomitant for an atheist. "...not all humanists are atheists, ...but presumably all atheists are humanists, since what else could they be?"

Even though the individuals associated with this outlook[475] do not discern any higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species (#96, +3 +2 +4), they nevertheless affirm the possibility of human progress on a worldwide scale (#95, +3 +2 +2). Rejection of religious doctrines does not lead to a vacuum of values. Believing that one can be deeply moral and compassionate without being religious (#83, +4 +4 +4), they seek to follow a well-defined set of moral principles (#54, +3 +2 +3). This is not only something internal. On the contrary, showing evidence of being a compassionate person (#77, +4 +2 +3), being active to relieve the suffering of others (#29, +4 +2 +2) and making the world a better place to live (#51, +4 +2 +2) are important ideals. Persons of this viewpoint embrace a spiritual outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values (#56, +3 +2 +2), which is in line with participating in organisations dedicated to promoting ideals and affecting change in society. At the same time, there is respect for the stance of others, even when different from one's own: Individual freedom of choice, if it is thoughtfully responsible, is valued and championed (#100, +3 +4 +4).

There is one more topic that belongs to the common ground. This is the role of experiences in the worldview. Instead of prescribed religious practices, rituals, scriptures and experiences, the Finnish non-religious derive sustenance and inspiration from other sources. Let us see how the experiential dimension of their worldview looks like.

Experiential dimension. FQS has several statements that allow for expressing sources of inspiration. The respondents made use of these statements. Their experiential dimension involves music, art or poetry, which give them nourishment and sustenance (#33, +2 +4 +3). Feeling most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of the natural world (#11, +2, +3, +1), they feel at home in the universe (#59, +3 +4 +2) rather than anticipate a life hereafter (#52, -3 -1 -4).

These characteristics are shared by all prototypes, even though there are differences of degree. The following prototype descriptions reflect these kinds of differences. At times, differences are more pronounced, and perspectives opposite to one another can be observed.

[475] Referring to the preferences shared by the respondents as a group

7.3 Emerging Worldview Prototypes

The three worldview prototypes had different preferences regarding many issues. I have named these prototypes based on these differences. The prototype names are simplifications that are meant to capture the essence of the viewpoint with as few words as possible. The choice of the prototype names is also meant to highlight the differences between the prototypes *internal to this study*. This means that other kinds of prototype names might better reflect the shared ground of these prototypes when juxtaposed with notably different pools of respondents.

The first prototype is named Content Altruist, pointing to the central features of both being at ease with one's life and the world, and being focused on making the world a better place. The second prototype, however, values meaningful and inspirational experiences, combined with an openness to spirituality. Accordingly, the name is Experientially Spiritual. The third prototype was different from the other two in its giving importance to being part of a group of people with a similar worldview, and its rejection of religion and spirituality that was more consistent and pronounced than in the other prototypes. I decided therefore to call this prototype Communally Irreligious.

Further commentary on my chosen prototype names are needed. Using the word "spiritual" in the name of the second prototype is a choice based on a pragmatic consideration. The prototype shares some similarities with one of the major prototypes initially identified by Professor Wulff, which he named Spiritually Attuned. While some scholars follow Kenneth Pargament in maintaining that spirituality is located at the core of religion,[476] others disagree and view the two as separate domains. By naming the prototype as spiritual I do not intend to participate in this debate. Rather, I am using the word as a pragmatic strategy. Within the larger context of FQS, it seems, so far, motivated to separate traditional religiosity from spirituality. Within the more local context of the present study this distinction becomes crucial, as all prototypes are alienated from traditional religiosity, while one of them is at the same time open for spirituality. What this means in emic terms becomes clear from the prototype description.

Using Irreligious instead of Non-religious is a choice I made to capture the difference in nuance between non-religion and irreligion: Non-religion is open for differentiation from religion, where the disposition towards religion is nevertheless positive or neutral. Irreligion is not open for that kind of differentiation, and therefore it is a more appropriate name for the third prototype and its tendency to reject religion and spirituality.

[476] See Pargament and Zinnbauer 2005: 36-37

These names make most sense after establishing the worldview commonality shared by all respondents. That is why it was introduced first. The names do not necessarily place these prototypes on a global worldview map. To do that, an additional family-name that points to the secular humanistic disposition might be added to all prototype names. With this solution we might call the first prototype Content Altruistic Secular Humanist. Even though the name is accurate, it is unnecessarily long for the purposes of the present study, where the focus on non-religion is understood at the outset. Longer names are more useful in the context of comparing the worldview prototypes that emerge from different studies, where e.g. non-religious individuals could be compared with religious respondents. With his extensive knowledge of all FQS-studies conducted in different parts of the world, David Wulff has proposed that the first prototype be named Content Altruist, whereas the second one be called Spiritually Attuned Humanist, and the third one Religion-rejecting Humanist. I have no objection with these names. Since I want to highlight the differences between the prototypes rather than the more global features, I will use my own names henceforward. That said, it is important to keep in mind where FQS differs from most other Q-methodological studies. In most Q-methodological studies the Q-set is designed to be used only in that particular study. FQS, however, has already been used in many other studies than the present one, both in Finland and elsewhere. In the future, more such studies are likely to emerge.[477] Therefore, the more comprehensive prototype naming is an important issue. The prototype names used in this study might therefore be altered when discussing the same prototypes in a broader context. Let us begin by learning about the first prototype, Content Altruist.

7.3.1 Worldview Prototype I: Content Altruist

Persons associated with this prototype were distinct from persons associated with the other prototypes in some notable ways. Societally they have a universalistic orientation, with concerns spanning outside their own group interests. These concerns are combined with activism: putting the ideals in practice is important for them. Emotionally, persons of this prototype have a stable and content disposition. The exception for the general contentment is religion, even though at times the universalism and activism dictate that persons of this prototype are prepared to co-operate with religious people for a common goal. Hence, their rejection of religion is somewhat more based on its effects than falsity.

[477] When I write this, an international collaboration of FQS studies focusing on the worldviews of young adults has been launched.

Altruistic Activism: More than the other prototypes, people associated with this prototype emphasised the importance of practically working to improve things. The three individuals who had the highest affinity with this prototype exemplified this: One participated in politics, non-religious organisations, wrote a blog and contributed to magazines.[478] Another one was engaged in volunteer work, not only in a non-religious organisation, but also in the Scouts. This respondent mentioned having earlier participated in the church's youth activities, which she considered valuable, even though she did not personally believe in the teachings of the church.[479] A third one held the post of a chairman in one of the non-religious organisations, and talked in length of the need to change the Finnish society, to which he wanted to contribute by his considerable organisational involvement.[480] Other individuals who were associated with this prototype expressed global concerns regarding environment and world peace.[481]

Making the present world a better place was a theme evidenced by the FQS item preferences. The column loadings in the factor array revealed a firm focus on the present, taking the form of concerns for the world and valuing action to bring about positive changes. Religious propositions (#92, -3) and orientations that would span beyond the present life and this-worldly concerns (#22, -1; #52, -3; #68, -3; #79, -1; #99, -3) were replaced by an outlook that actively seeks to change society (#56, +3). Naturally, religious ideas that spanned beyond the present life - reincarnation (#90, -4) and salvation (#38, -3) - were rejected. People associated with this prototype would not believe in, serve, or feel the presence of the divine (#53, -3; #36, -4; #78, -3), and they would not feel forgiven, protected, guided or abandoned by the divine (#71, -3;#74, -4; #50, -4). Religion overall was seen as an illusory creation of human fears and desires (#60, +2).

In religion's place, persons associated with this prototype affirm a fundamental core of values (#98, +4) and the possibility of human progress on a worldwide scale (#95, +3). More than in the other two prototypes, they feel the importance of showing evidence of being a caring and compassionate person (#77, +4; +2 and +3 for the other prototypes). They are dedicated to making the world a better place to live (#51, +4), and work actively to relieve the suffering of others (#29, +4). Instead of turning to the divine in gratitude or praying for solace and protection (#46 -2; #62 -3), they express their faith primarily in charitable acts or social action (#27, +2), and by reaching out to those in need (#48, +2).

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[478] JK1043

[479] JK1066

[480] JK1050

[481] JK1034; JK1035

The above characterisations were based on clearly expressed preferences in favour of or against the ideas expressed in the worldview statements of FQS. Whereas I have mainly presented them in a self-referential manner, I have hinted at features that make this prototype stand apart from the other non-religious prototypes. On the positive side, the active orientation towards life through altruistic emphasis is visible. Even though the other two prototypes also place positive value on making the world a better place, actively working to relieve the suffering of others, affirming and promoting a fundamental core of values and showing evidence of being a caring and compassionate person, for the Content Altruist these statements are not simply a matter of nominal agreement: being amongst the five most important FQS items, these ideas positively define this prototype. Item #83 which "Believes that one can be deeply moral and compassionate without being religious," is the only one that all three prototypes valued equally as +4. The other four were placed one or two columns lower by the other prototypes.

The emphasis on actively improving the world gets further support by other items. #40 "Expresses his or her faith by following certain dietary practices" is placed at 0. At first sight, the placing of this item in the middle column by this prototype would indicate ambivalence or neutrality. In other words, the dietary considerations do not occupy a central place in this worldview. However, when this item is combined with other preferences, and compared with how the other prototypes view the same, it suddenly becomes interesting: The other prototypes placed the same item in -3 and -1, respectively. I decided to investigate this further by examining the interviews. The examination revealed that some respondents indeed followed a certain diet - vegetarian or abstaining from red meat - choices motivated by ethical and environmental reasons. This is in line with the overall profile that is starting to emerge: the Content Altruist has interest in expressing their stated ideals in action. However, the topic about diet gets scored very differently by different respondents who are associated with this prototype.[482] It therefore seems that eating is not a typical concern for this prototype. Acting out the ideals is what is typical, and for some, ethics are expressed by dietary preferences. Interestingly, one of the prototypes identified by Felix Pennanen in his MA study of followers of LCHF-diet was very similar to the Content Altruist, except for the fact that Pennanen's prototype ranked the item about diet in +4.[483] This shows how exploring distinctions between closely related worldview prototypes can sometimes be a matter of just one item.

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[482] +3: JK1007
+2: JK1067; JK1044;
+1: JK1024;
0: JK1049; JK1050; JK1066; JK1069
-1: JK1035; JK1042; JK1062; JK1065; JK1072
-2: JK1009; JK1043
-3: JK1017: -3

[483] See Pennanen 2013, section 5.3

Some other items support the interpretation. Item #1 (Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organisation or cause) is placed at -1, which indicates a slight disagreement. The other prototypes, however, place the same item at -3. Perhaps the explanation is found in the value placed on practical activism: if religious people happen to do something commendable, the Content Altruists do not totally rule out supporting such an activity. Some interviews supported this interpretation: Whereas one respondent saw Jesus as an example of someone taking action against exploitative capitalism[484], others had engaged in societal action together with religious people, unified by a cause for the common good.[485]

Another item reads: "Feels guilty for not living up to religious ideals" (#5). Content Altruists place it at -1, indicating a mild disagreement. The other prototypes, however, place the same item at -3 and -2 respectively, expressing more disagreement. For all prototypes, religious ideals seem unimportant. The conclusion that is in line with the general profile of the Content Altruist is that even though *religious* ideals are not of importance, living up to ideals is. Yet another one, #50 (Feels divine forgiveness for earlier thoughts and deeds) is amongst the bottom five items, valued as -4. The other two prototypes placed the same item at -2. People associated with this prototype are focused on acting out what their conscience dictates; whereas the aspect of divinity is rejected by all prototypes, forgiveness for past wrongs seems least compatible with this prototype. This is best captured by one respondent I call Leif, who explicitly contrasts ethical action with forgiveness for past mistakes:

> I and other non-believers have to live in such a way that we do not have to ask for forgiveness.[486]

Improving the world occupied the central place in the horizon of this prototype, yet it is no less interesting to point out another notable characteristic. The visibly altruistic orientation was accompanied by a contentment with life; persons associated with this prototype seemed emotionally stable and satisfied with life as they experienced it. I will explore this under the heading Emotional Stability.

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[484] JK1035

[485] JK1009; JK1066

[486] JK1009

Emotional Stability: Instead of anticipating or being anxious about the hereafter (#52, -3; #68, -3), people of this prototype feel a sense of peace even in the face of life's difficulties (#75, +2). Furthermore, they face the prospect of death with courage and equanimity (#80, +3). Even though this item (#80) did not quite make it to the top-five, examination of z-scores reveals that it was the eighth most important item. As such, clearly of importance for this prototype, and something which stands out more when compared with the other two prototypes, which gave the same item values +1 and +2. Combined with the sense of peace even in the face of life's difficulties (#75, +2), also placed a little higher than the other prototypes, we get the impression of a worldview where the experiential and emotional realm is dominated by stability and contentment.

This interpretation is further supported by items placed at the negative end of the board. Seeking to intensify one's experience of the divine or the ultimate (#49) was placed at -2, indicating more disagreement with this idea than the other prototypes. Whereas it is to be expected that non-religious persons would not be interested in the divine, the Content Altruist differs from the other prototypes in this: the overall contentment of the persons associated with this prototype seems to make it unnecessary for them to seek to *intensify* their experiences, divine or secular. Their outlook is stable rather than vague and shifting (#84, -2; -1 and 0 for the other prototypes); and they certainly do not feel adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal (#35, -2). When it comes to praying for solace and protection (#62), all prototypes reject this idea. The Content Altruists, however, seem least likely to need solace and protection, disagreeing with such an idea more the other prototypes (-3, -2 and -1 for the others).

The Content Altruists seem to prefer clarity over the mysterious: They do not see the transcendent as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never grasped (#88, -2; +1 and 0 for the other prototypes). Instead, they view symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of ultimate (#94, +2; +1 and 0 for the other prototypes). Despite the general sense of stability in life and clarity in their outlook, there is some ambiguity that can be observed in relation to religion and spirituality. This will be our next topic.

Ambiguity towards Religion and Spirituality: The Content Altruists place items that use expressions "religious or spiritual" in a curious fashion when compared with the other prototypes, and they do this consistently. Whenever an item uses an expression "religious or spiritual", the Content Altruist ranks the item lower than one prototype that I call Experientially Spiritual, and higher than another one that I call Communally Irreligious. I will present the other prototypes later, but it is in place to already hint at their characteristics here: The Experientially Spiritual are open to spirituality, whereas the Communally Irreligious consistently reject both religion and spirituality. Not so for the Content Altruists, who are more ambiguous.

The ambiguity can be observed in the following dispositions that are related to spirituality: Experiences of profound illumination (#89, 0) are neither important nor rejected. The same goes for taking interest in religious or spiritual matters (#24, 0, placed at +2 by one and -2 by the other prototype). Item #31, "Thinks frequently and deeply about religious or spiritual questions" was assigned a positive value by all prototypes. For the Content Altruists, the value +2 was in between the second (+3) and third (+1) prototype. What about centring one's life on a religious or spiritual quest (#64)? The Content Altruists rank it at 0, again in between the other prototypes. Having a religious or spiritual identity is neither important for them, nor rejected (#16, 0). Whereas the Content Altruists do not view all events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework (#79, -1), they are not as negative with this item as the Communally Irreligious, yet not as positive as the Experientially Spiritual. One feature is common to all these dispositions: The Content Altruist falls always in between the other prototypes, being more open for the religious or the spiritual than the Communally Irreligious, and less than the Experientially Spiritual. The comparison reveals that these items are not simply ambivalent, but less meaningful than for one prototype and more meaningful than for another. To understand what this means, we shall examine further.

Since the above wordings use the expression "religious or spiritual" and it is possible that this leads to experiencing these statements as ambiguous, let us see how this prototype views topics that are expressed as spiritual, without mentioning religion. Persons associated with this prototype feel most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of the natural world (#11, +2), seeking to follow a spiritual path that, above all, is in harmony with the Earth (#86, +1). These are indications that this prototype is open for spirituality that is associated with nature. Even more so, if spirituality is associated with societal action: The Content Altruists embrace a spiritual outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values (#56, +3). They are, however, not particularly keen on regularly engaging in private spiritual practices (#23, -1). This is probably due to the inward rather than societal focus of such activities, indicated by the word *private.* We have seen that the Content Altruists are keen on promoting a better world and helping others. And they are definitely not looking for a spiritual home, if spiritual home is understood as being part of a religious group (#72, -4). Rather, they are open for furnishing their living space with objects intended to create a spiritual mood (#65, +1). It seems, therefore, that spirituality is associated positively with activism and sensitivity with one's environment. It is associated negatively with religious groups and spiritual practices.

How about religion without spirituality? In line with their focus on activism, persons of this prototype are not strongly opposed to giving substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organisation or cause (#1, -1; ranked at -3 by the other prototypes), nor are they totally alienated from the idea of being active, contributing members of some religious community (#97, -1; ranked at -4 and -3 by the others). Even though the Content Altruists place these items in -1, indicating disagreement, we can see how the disagreement is milder than in the other prototypes. Similarly, the idea of regretting the personal loss of religious faith or a sense of God's presence is rejected less than in the other prototypes (#26, -1; -3 and -2 by others). How about the attitudes towards religious

revelation and authority? Even though persons of this prototype do not consider religious propositions to be true (#92, -3), they have some knowledge of religious scriptures (42, +1; ranked at 0 by others). They are ambivalent about the meaning of religious scriptures being clear and unambiguous (#15, 0; placed at -2 by the other prototypes), and are less inclined to consider religious scriptures of human authorship than the other prototypes (#18, +1; ranked at +2 and +3 by others). Likewise, they are less than the other prototypes inclined to viewing religious content as mythic and metaphoric, rather than literally true (#87, +2; ranked at +3 by the other prototypes). Whereas they do not rely on religious authorities for understanding and direction (#20, -2), the other prototypes rely less (item ranked at -3 by the other prototypes). The differences are small, but consistent.

Focus on activism is a likely explanation why this prototype would be more inclined to contribute to a religious cause or organisation. To understand why this prototype does not strongly reject lamentation over loss of faith and religious authority we need to turn to their interpersonal orientation.

Since the persons associated with this prototype are focused on helping rather than depending on others, they firmly reject the idea of moving from one religious group to another in search of a spiritual home (#72, -4). It may seem self-evident that moving from a religious group to another is out of question for a non-religious person. The Content Altruists nevertheless describe their background as mildly more religious or less non-religious (#9, +1) than the other prototypes that place the same item at 0.

The interviews inform us that out of the 16 respondents associated with this prototype, 12 individuals elaborated on their childhood, upbringing and adolescence, where common church activities such as baptising their children, participation in confirmation and even actively engaging in the activities of the local parish were not uncommon.[487] For the other prototypes, less than half of the respondents spoke about a religious familial environment. For some Content Altruists, active participation in the activities of the church and personal religious experiences had been part of their background. For most, however, religion did not seem to be a matter of deep personal commitment, even though their family may have been nominally Christian.

Juha, a professional psychologist, mentions growing up in a religious environment and being personally religious in his youth.

> Mother was religious all her life. I remember also that during confirmation, I was moved during the eucharist and I was in all ways trying to be religious.

[487] JK1009; JK1017; JK1024; JK1042; JK1044; JK1049; JK1050; JK1065; JK1066; JK1067; JK1069; JK1072

Later when he studied the history of Christianity he came to the conclusion that religion was manufactured by people:

> The tenets are man-made. People themselves have created religion.[488]

Elli, on the other hand, grew up in a religious home and participated actively in church youth activities. At the same time, she denies ever being deeply religious personally:

> What a little child thinks, I interpret it to belong to the family, it has not been my own deep conviction, but a child's faith that is taught to someone.[489]

More than in the other prototypes, persons associated with this prototype describe their familial environment as religious. Why is it that they are at the same time more decisive in rejecting the idea of moving from one religious group to another? Moving from one religious group to another is obviously not something that non-religious people would do. The question is why this prototype is more pronounced about rejecting this idea. To understand how this prototype relates to others, we can examine some other items.

The Content Altruists feel some closeness to those who share their worldview (#47, +1), yet they are less likely than the other prototypes to *mainly* associate with persons of the same outlook (#76, -1). Considering that in many cases their social circle includes or has included family members and friends who have religious inclinations, their openness to associating with such persons with different outlooks is understandable. On the other hand, they have not felt positively engaged by the symbols of other persons' religious traditions (#81, -1). It seems that whereas religious symbols are not important to them, they do not mind the company of persons of a different outlook.

When these considerations about group-orientation are combined with the more prominent features of this worldview - expressing their faith by reaching out to those in need (#48, +2), actively working to relieve the suffering of others (#29, +4), and showing evidence of being a caring and compassionate person (77 +4), the emerging social orientation seems to be this: persons associated with this prototype do not associate their identity with being part of a group. Their social focus is of a universalistic kind, where the society and world at large are equally appropriate recipients of their help.

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[488] JK1044

[489] JK1066

Some of the differences that I have elaborated on are not radical; to find radical differences we might have to compare conservative religious persons with non-religious individuals. Yet the differences are sufficient to indicate different kinds of non-religious worldview prototypes. The differences will begin to make more sense once we become familiar with the other worldview prototypes. One of them is called Experientially Spiritual.

7.3.2 Worldview Prototype II: Experientially Spiritual

The discussion on spirituality with the Content Altruist already gave a a glimpse at what is special about the second prototype: openness to spirituality. I will begin by analysing this feature.

Spirituality: More than with the other two prototypes, persons associated with this prototype centre their lives on a religious or spiritual quest (#64, +1), being religious or spiritual is the core of their identity (#16, +1) and they view all events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework (#79, +1). Disinterest in religious or spiritual matters (#24, -2) is also absent. These features are telling, not because the values assigned to the statements would be radically different from the other prototypes but rather the differences are most of all very consistent. They, therefore, give a clue about openness to spirituality.

For this prototype, the importance of spirituality can be observed more clearly with some other items. The Experientially Spiritual think deeply and frequently about religious or spiritual questions (#31, +3) and feel most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of the natural world (#11, +3). And they do more than that: they invest regularly time and energy in private spiritual practices (#23, +2). Item #23 names prayer, yoga and meditation as examples of spiritual practices. When I examined all 77 interviews, it turned out that the respondents of this study do not pray. Some had done it in their childhood, a few had prayed in their adult age, yet only one respondent seemed to engage in prayer more than occasionally. This respondent is associated with the Experientially Spiritual prototype. The meaning of prayer for this respondent, however, differs from its regular monotheistic connotations:

> Sometimes I pray, for selfish reasons, when I want something for myself...it is more like I am pepping up myself. But there is always a chance that someone can hear it, I just do not know.[490]

[490] JK1038

Yoga and meditation, however, were fairly common. Therefore it seems that for the people associated with this prototype, spiritual practices do not take place in monotheistic frameworks. Note the difference between Experientially Spiritual and Content Altruist; for the latter, spirituality was important when it was about societal action, and to a lesser extent, about their surroundings and environment. For this prototype, it is about private practices and experiences, even though the Experientially Spiritual are in favour of changing societal structures (#56, +3), just as the other prototypes. This is hardly surprising considering that amongst the respondents, affiliation for societal change is common.

It is also interesting how the respondent above talked about prayer as pepping up oneself. Yoga and meditation can likewise be seen as activities where emphasis is on personal development. For the persons associated with this prototype, spirituality seems closer to what has been called "sacralisation of the self," or "self-spirituality."[491] It certainly does not mean private monotheistic piety. The emphasis on the self gets further support from some other items.

Individualism: Personal development is important for the Experientially Spiritual: Rather than feeling adrift, without purpose or goal (#35, -2), they see the realisation of human potentialities to be the goal of life (#93, +3). This is combined with the rejection of religious authorities (#20, -3) and engagement in religious occasions for social reasons (#7, -2; #21, -1). Overall, attendance at religious services is not seen as an essential expression of faith (#30, -1). Also, membership in a religious community is amongst the least agreeable ideas (#97, -4) - much more so than for the other prototypes. It is clear that this prototype emphasises personal agency and being socially independent - an individualistic rather than collectivistic disposition.

Rejection of Group-oriented, Ritualistic and Authoritarian Religion: Since there is openness for the religious or the spiritual, we need to further examine what kind of religiosity or spirituality is acceptable, and what is rejected. It was mentioned above that people associated with this prototype are not interested in religious ritualism: they neither participate in religious practices to satisfy other's expectations (#7, -2), nor to form or to maintain friendships or business associations (#21, -1). They definitely neither observe with great care prescribed religious practices or prohibitions (#67, -4), nor express their faith by following certain dietary practices (#40, -3). Emotionally, they do not feel any guilt with not living up to religious ideals (#5, -3). Whereas the other prototypes likewise disagreed with these statements, the Experientially Spiritual prototype was much sharper in their rejection of them. No wonder they do not rely on religious authorities for understanding and direction (#20, -3). Giving substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organisation or cause is likewise out of question (#1, -3).

[491] Heelas 1992: 139-151; Heelas 1996: 2, 19-20, 82; Houtman and Aupers 2008: 101–102

However, whereas the idea that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation is rejected (#22, -3), there is general interest in religious and spiritual matters (#24, -2; #31, +3). Even though religious doctrines and authorities are rejected, all religious scriptures are not considered outdated or misguided (#32, 0). For one respondent, Christianity as part of the human cultural heritage and basis of morality deserves respect.[492] For others, Buddhist or New Age texts act as sources of inspiration.[493] Indeed, it seemed that for persons associated with this prototype, non-Abrahamic religiosity was much less alien than for the persons associated with the other prototypes: Item #90 (Affirms the doctrine of reincarnation, the cycle of birth and death) was placed at -1 by this prototype, whereas the other two placed it at -4 and -3. In tune with the disposition towards reincarnation, this prototype does not strongly reject the idea of living one's earthly life in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter. (#52, -1; -3 and -4 for the other prototypes). Elaborated by one respondent:

> ...some doctrines of reincarnation are much more rational than most doctrines about God. So I do not necessarily rule out reincarnation as much as the idea of divine guidance.[494]

To accommodate the idea of reincarnation, another respondent, reverberating the ideas of a prominent Buddhist teacher, said:

> In this life it is a challenge to give up the concept of 'I' already during this life. That one does not die means that matter transforms, it does not disappear. Tich n'ath Ahn says that things appear when it is time for that, and I appear in this world when it is time, and later I give nourishment for a tree and become leaves...but I do not believe in reincarnation of soul, or that there would be a separate soul that moves from man or body to another. I cannot understand that. It is more this cycle of life.[495]

It would be going too far to claim that these respondents take teachings of reincarnation at face value. But the idea is not strongly rejected either. In general, religious content is seen as mythic and metaphoric, hence not literally true (#87, +3), yet there is a feeling of positive engagement by the symbols of other persons' religious traditions (#81, +1). Overall, their worldview seems to be open to revisions: persons associated with this prototype are open to doubting their outlook (#57, -2; #2, 0), whereas the other prototypes are not.

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[492] JK1063

[493] JK1023; JK1038; JK1051; JK1053

[494] JK1053

[495] JK1051

Experiential orientation: A further positive engagement with religion takes place in the realm of culture, which acts as impetus for positive experiences. Experiences were already mentioned in connection to nature. Now it is time to examine other items, where experience is emphasised. Amongst the five most agreeable items, three had experiential connotations. Like the other two prototypes, this prototype champions individual freedom of choice if it is thoughtfully responsible (#100) and believes that one can be deeply moral and compassionate without being religious (#83). The Experientially Spiritual prototype is different from the other two prototypes by combining these preferences with a rich inner life. Persons associated with this prototype feel moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry (#33, +4) and take delight in paradox and mystery (#91, +4). Furthermore, they have a feeling of being at home in the universe (#59, +4). It is not that the other prototypes do not have similar sentiments, but for the Experientially Spiritual, these features are central. Regarding music, art or poetry, if the music or art is religious, that is not an impediment for relishing it. The positive engagement with religious art was mentioned in many interviews: some listened regularly to religious music[496] or felt inspired by gospels.[497] Others admired the acoustics of the churches,[498] even passages in the Bible.[499]

The experiential realm and the spiritual realm are not just two disparate features that happen to coexist within one prototype: both features are interconnected, and people associated with this prototype have experienced moments of profound illumination (#89, +2). This is how Sari, a middle-aged carpenter, discusses her spirituality:

> Spirituality means recognising yourself in this world. An individual human being is a kind of spiritual being, I mean not that one would be some angel or something, but because brain has evolved so far that it can also create something, some this kind of abstract worldview and make conclusions, and the like. Spirituality is part of the human being, very strongly but then also religion is part of the spirituality that the individual builds up. Spirituality is more a matter of identity than religion.

For her, spirituality is not a matter of experiencing a reality that exists independent of herself. It is the result of the brain's capacity for abstract thinking, and a matter of recognising oneself in the world. Yet it seems to be more than just abstract ideas. Sari has experienced illuminating moments, sometimes in the midst of seemingly ordinary activities:

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[496] JK1058

[497] JK1053

[498] JK1023

[499] JK1038

> Actually, experiencing moments of profound illumination is quite simple things. Having experienced a moment, one has experienced that everything is right here. There is no such great that someone from the outside would have given me something, but one has experienced peace, that this is it. Like, while washing dishes. It is a kind of meditation. I wrote above the draining board: "When you give up performing and put your soul into what you do, even washing dishes can become every day art." It is awareness that one does not need anything greater. That you can be satisfied with the touch of warm water. To see the beauty in a moment, which may be self-evident.[500]

Jari, a musician, feels alienated from religion. He thinks that religion is a form of addiction comparable to alcoholism. Yet when he discusses transcendence, his tone changes:

> It is this hot topic: what the religions and belief systems are looking for and centring around. Trying to get a grasp on it somehow. It is probably something, like, how an eye can look at itself. This kind of paradox, *experience* [italics added] of some existence, in a way that cannot be conceived of or conceptualised.

When I asked him if he had personal experiences of the kind, he replied:

> In a good day there may be those, small...perhaps rather they are experiences, where every thing is perfectly all right, one does not have to endeavour for anything. When it passes, one starts to worry, and...maybe it is also, like, there is emptiness regarding everything that goes on in the mind. One manages to slow down and calm down.[501]

The respondents associated with this prototype talked about experiences in different ways: in connection with nature, with art, even with religious music or rituals. The beauty of such moments was recognised, whereas the religious framework to explain such experiences was not.

The importance of experiences is further supported by preferences, where the Experientially Spiritual differs from the other prototypes. More than the other prototypes, people with Experientially Spiritual tendencies have felt positively engaged by the symbols of other persons' religious traditions (#81, +1) and moved by the atmosphere of religious sanctuaries or shrines (#14, +1). There is also some sense of a transcendent or universal luminous element within (#44, +1)

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[500] JK1075

[501] JK1023

These experiences give sustenance to the Experientially Spiritual. Their spirituality is this-worldly: they do not think that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation (#22, -3) and they have no anxiety about their fate in the next life (#68, -4). The other prototypes shared these preferences, yet in a less pronounced manner. The Experientially Spiritual individuals only slightly agree with facing the prospect of death with courage and equanimity (#80, +1) - less than the other prototypes. At the same time, they were less eager to reject the idea of living one's earthly life in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter (#52, -1; -3 and -4 for the other prototypes). Perhaps the temporality of life raises some concerns for the people associated with this prototype. Another explanation might be found in their somewhat open disposition towards reincarnation.

The other prototypes reject feelings of divine presence (#10, -2 and -2), whereas the Experientially spiritual does not (#10, 0). The other prototypes strongly reject the protection and guidance by a spiritual being (#74, -4 and -4), whereas the Experientially Spiritual disagree less (#74, -1). They also reject the awareness of divine presence less than the other prototypes (#78,-2; -3 and -4 for others). Even though the Experientially Spiritual are definitely not inclined to monotheism, meaningful positive experiences are familiar, including those that could be called spiritual ones. This would explain why items that deal with encounters with the divine are not strongly rejected. However, based on the sorting configurations and the interviews, it is safe to say that the locus of these experiences - whether called divine, transcendent, or illumination - is placed in the self.

To summarise the distinguishing features of this prototype: This outlook is open to doubts, which may be a sign of a quest-orientation. Experiences and spirituality are important for the persons associated with this prototype. The relationship to religiosity is ambivalent: religious art and symbols, as well as shrines or sanctuaries, can act as catalysts for positive experiences, and so do engagement in private spiritual practices. Experiences of illumination are not uncommon. Spirituality in general is approved, and there is deep interest in religious or spiritual questions. On the other hand, group-oriented religiosity dominated by rules and observances is rejected. New Age and Eastern religiosity are less alien than Abrahamic traditions. Instead of religious authorities, the locus of control is in the self.[502] Persons associated with this prototype are more individualistic than persons associated with the other prototypes: Whereas the Content Altruist has a universalistic social orientation, and the third one, the Communally Irreligious, likes to associate with likeminded people, the Experientially Spiritual is neither: They are more tuned into inner experiences, personal development, and independence of both traditions, others' expectations and authorities.

[502] Relationships to religion: rejection of authority (#20, -3); group-oriented religiosity (#7, -2; #21, -1, #30, -1; #97, -4); religious rules and observances (#67, -4; #40, -3; #5, -3); mild openness to religious experiences ((#10, 0); appreciation of religious culture (#14, +1; #81, +1); Spirituality: engagement in practices (#23, +2); experiences of illumination; interest (#31, +3; #24, -2), reincarnation, identity (#16, +1), spiritual worldview (#79, +1); in nature (#11, +3); Experience: music, art, poetry (#33, +4); nature (#11, +3); paradoxes and mystery (#91, +4); feeling home in the universe (#59, +4); Individualism (#93, +3; #35, -2); Open to doubting their outlook (#57, -2; #2, 0)

The third prototype is different from the Experientially Spiritual in three ways: by strongly rejecting religion and spirituality, by emphasising the value of likeminded company, and by a somewhat different emotional profile. Let us now explore this prototype more closely.

7.3.3 Worldview Prototype III: Communally Irreligious

Persons associated with the Communally Irreligious prototype share much with the other prototypes: Even though they discern no higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species (#96, +4), they affirm and promote a fundamental core of values (#98, +3) and champion individual freedom of choice if it is thoughtfully responsible (#100, +4). Believing that one can be deeply moral and compassionate without being religious (#83, +4), they seek to follow a well-defined set of moral principles (#54, #3) and show evidence of being caring and compassionate (#77, +3). This care and compassion, however, does not involve giving substantial amounts of time or money to any religious organisation or cause (#1, -3). Despite the many similarities this prototype has with the others, its own peculiarities deserve attention. Thus, I divide the investigation into three domains: rejection of religion, emotional profile, and attention to like-minded company. Let us begin with the second part in the prototype name that reflects the rejection of religion.

Rejection of Religion: When it comes to rejecting religion, persons associated with this prototype are the most consistent in this regard. Hence, I use the name Irreligious rather than Non-religious. A question may be raised, why not go all the way and call this prototype anti-religious. Both terms capture the rejection of religion. However, irreligion as a term does somewhat more justice to the prototype. Anti-religion refers to plain rejection, whereas irreligion accommodates more nuances. The nuance that I wish to particularly accommodate is the disposition of being disinterested in religion. Clearly, all respondents of this study do have interest in religion, in terms of choosing to differentiate themselves from it. In the context of irreligion, disinterest in religion is not a neutral disposition, but has a markedly negative tone. As one respondent put it, religion in itself is personally felt as irrelevant, yet some features about religious institutions cause irritation.[503] It is the combination of disinterest with irritation or rejection of some features of religion that is captured better by irreligion than anti-religion, the latter term being about *interested* rejection, the former accommodating also *disinterested* rejection.

As mentioned previously, one needs to remember that the following by-item differences between the prototypes are often not large. The distinct profile for this prototype emerges due to the consistency in ranking items that discuss religion and spirituality.

[503] JK1029

Persons of this prototype view religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires (#60, +4). Rejecting religious authorities (#20, -3) as well as religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles (#70, +3), they view religious content as mythic and metaphoric (#87, +3), hence not true (#87, +3; +92, -4). Consistently, ideas of salvation (#38, -3), hell (#99, -3), reincarnation (#90, -3) and divinity (#36, -4; #53, -3; #55, +4; #74, -4; #78, -4; #85, +2) are rejected. The theme of divinity clearly stands out: Persons associated with this prototype have not dedicated their life to serving the divine (#36, -4); they personally find the idea of divinity empty of significance (#55, +4); they do not feel personally protected and guided by a spiritual being (#74, -4); nor are they keenly aware of the presence of the divine (#78, -4). None of these preferences are held only by this prototype, and not by others: it is the consistency and strength in rejecting ideas associated with divine that stands out.

In addition, more than the other prototypes persons of this prototype consider religious scriptures of human authorships, inspired perhaps, but not infallible (#18, +3). The interviews of those respondents who commented on this item revealed a consistency with the previous items rejecting any ontological reality of divinity: "inspired perhaps" is understood as referring to how the religious people probably view the scriptures, not as an actual divine inspiration.[504] This does not come as a surprise, considering what we already know about them.

The Communally Irreligious are special in their lack of vagueness and ambiguity while confronting religion and spirituality. Previously, we have seen that different prototypes relate differently to items using the expression "religious or spiritual". The Communally Irreligious consistently rank these items in a way that more than the other prototypes reflect an antagonistic or disinterested disposition in religious or spiritual matters: They do not view all events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework (#79, -3); they do not centre their life on a religious or spiritual quest (#64, -2), neither is being religious or spiritual at the core of their identity (#16, -1).

Whereas the other prototypes think frequently and deeply about religious or spiritual questions (#31, +2 and +3), the Communally Irreligious is just slightly open to such engagement (#31, +1). At the same time, they take no interest in religious or spiritual matters (#24, +2). Taken together, these two statements may seem somewhat puzzling: on the one hand, thinking of religious or spiritual questions is not rejected; on the other hand, there is no interest in religious or spiritual matters. I decided to explore the interviews to gain insight into how the respondents themselves discussed the relationships between these items. Six respondents addressed the issue in various ways. While all six held that they have no personal interest in religious or spiritual matters, they mentioned how such topics would nevertheless intrigue them.

[504] JK1013; JK1046; PN1005 FP1001; FP1002; FP1005

One theme was the dominance and influence of religious institutions in the public sphere, which caused irritation to the extent that the respondents were therefore instigated to think about religious or spiritual matters.[505] This attitude is captured in the following statement by one respondent:

> ...I have not engaged in criticising religion, it has not mattered. Later I have turned more critical towards organised religion, mainly institutions; individual persons' religious experiences are not subject to criticism. When people create power structures, it is annoying.[506]

Others held academic interest in religion: It would be intriguing to study and try to understand why some people are believers, or to study the history of the Bible or religions as an academic pursuit.[507] Some respondents did nevertheless acknowledge that they like to ponder over the ultimate questions, even though to call such reflection religious or spiritual may not be the best word to describe it.[508] Jussi ponders over how he as an atheist may hold interest in ultimate questions just like believers do, without having a religious framework:

> It is a fact that I have no interest in religious questions, but they are interesting to discuss, but I have no interest to be religious personally… "Thinks frequently about spiritual and religious questions" - I interpret it that I often ponder over the big questions out of a non-religious perspective...For an atheist it may mean that one finds comfort in that we are all made of the same substance, even though it is not that one believes that a fellow is waiting on a cloud...one can have spiritual thoughts that matter a lot.[509]

I have explored the curious combination of clearly expressed disinterest in religious or spiritual matters combined with openness to thinking about topics related to religion. The Communally Irreligious was the only prototype for which item #24 (Takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters) was placed amongst the 25 most agreeable items. This was apparently contradicted by another item expressing openness to thinking about religious or spiritual questions. The puzzle is resolved when we keep in mind that for most Communally Irreligious, there is no personal interest in religion or spirituality, but as sociological, political or psychological phenomena they deserve attention. The conclusion remains that the Communally Irreligious consistently reject religion and spirituality.

Since irritation with religious phenomena came up in some interviews, let us explore in more detail, what the emotional landscape of this prototype looks like.

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[505] JK1029; JK1074

[506] JK1029

[507] JK1046; FP1001

[508] JK1040; FP1005

[509] FP1005

Emotional Landscape: Previously, we saw how the Communally Irreligious prototype ranks higher than the other prototypes in those items where rejection of religion and divinity are emphasised. Often, the differences between the prototypes are not profound, and it is the consistency by which the Communally Irreligious engage in such rejection that makes the profile of this prototype stand out. This picture is slightly complicated with some items, where the rejection of religion or divinity is accompanied with emotional qualifiers. To begin with, the Communally Irreligious respondents feel angry at or distant from God or the divine (+1; -1 for the other prototypes). There are some other items which none of the prototypes agree with, but where the Communally Irreligious prototype disagrees less than the others is: feeling uncomfortable or fearful in turning to the divine (#39, 0; -1 for the others), feeling abandoned or rejected by God (#71, -2; -3 for the others) and feeling anxious about their fate in the next life (#68, -2; -3 and -4 for the others). This is puzzling, since one might assume that the religion-rejecting tendency of this prototype would lead to a strong rejection of these items. There is a more pronounced feeling of anger or distance towards God or the divine, and feelings of being uncomfortable, fearful, abandoned, rejected, or anxious are not rejected as strongly as in the other prototypes, even though the object of these feelings belongs to a realm that in the respondents' minds does not exist. Is it possible that the negative emotions expressed in the statements have an effect?

The Communally Irreligious persons also find belief in a benevolent god difficult in the face of evil (+2; 0; 1). It is not a surprise that the problem of theodicy would be acknowledged by non-religious persons, but out of the three prototypes, only the Communally Irreligious placed this item amongst the top 25 agreeable statements. I examined further, whether persons of this prototype would be more sensitive towards evil than persons associated with the other prototypes. *More than the other prototypes*, the Communally Irreligious feel threatened by evil forces at work in the world (#61, +1; 0 for the other prototypes). The distinction, however, is small and takes place in the neutral middle section of the board. It does not motivate characterising this prototype as being particularly sensitive towards evil.[510]

There is one item, however, that more clearly distinguishes this prototype from the others: Whereas the Content Altruist and Experientially Spiritual prototypes firmly deny feeling adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal (#35, -2 for these prototypes) the Communally Irreligious place this item in the neutral middle column (0). It is difficult to make out the significance of this. It would be different, had the item been placed amongst the three most agreeable columns. Instead, placing the item at 0 does not allow for conclusions without other hints to aid the interpretation. To find further hints about the emotional disposition of this prototype, I will next explore items with positive emotional content.

[510] The third FQS item that has the word *evil* in it (#63: Battles with inner impulses that are experienced as dark or even evil) is placed at 0 by all prototypes, making it irrelevant both self-referentially, as it is placed in the neutral section of the board, and inter-prototypically, as the differences between the prototypes can only be seen by examining the z-scores. The CI prototype has a slightly higher z-score than the others.

Less than the other prototypes, persons associated with the Communally Irreligious prototype feel attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of the natural world (#11, +1; +2 and +3 for the others), feel closer to the ultimate in certain places (#3, -1; 0 for the others) and have experienced moments of profound illumination (#89, -1; 0 and +2 for the others). Spiritual realities, ultimate, and illumination are all expressions where the consistency of ranking them lower could be attributed to this prototype's profile of rejecting religion and spirituality, rather than having to do with emotions per se. If the conclusion were to be that the Communally Irreligious are emotionally more tilting towards the negative, there would have to be further evidence found amongst such items which have no religious or spiritual connotations.

The examination of such items reveals that the Communally Irreligious feel at home in the universe (#59, +2), feel moved and deeply sustained by music, art or poetry (#33, +3), feel a sense of peace even in the face of life difficulties (#75, +1), face the prospect of death with courage and equanimity (#80, +2), and take delight in paradox and mystery (#91, +1). It would therefore be misleading to characterise the emotional life of the Communally Irreligious as lacking positive content. However, when all items that discuss emotions and feelings are examined, the Communally Irreligious has an overall tendency to score higher on negative emotions. Since many of these items have religious or spiritual wordings, the religious rejecting tendency rather than a general emotional disposition might be the cause for the distinction discussed here. We need to separately examine items without religious or spiritual content. This examination reveals the following distinctions between the prototypes: Unsurprisingly, the Experientially Spiritual prototype has a higher mean rank on items which discuss positive emotions than the Content Altruists and the Communally Irreligious. There is no notable difference between the Content Altruist and Communally Irreligious prototypes regarding these items. When we examine items without religious or spiritual content that discuss negative emotions, the Communally Irreligious has a higher mean rank than the other prototypes.[511] When this observation is added to what we know about this prototype's emotions with religion or spirituality, it would seem that this prototype is less inclined, than the other prototypes, to reject the statements about negative emotions. It is important to keep in mind that this distinction is visible when the three prototypes are compared with one another. There is no claim made that the Communally Irreligious would be somehow particularly prone to negative emotions, even though it is clear that with religion, this is a possibility that cannot be ruled out. I will return to this later when I examine the interviews by prototype. At this point, it seems that the information I have presented about the emotional life of this prototype so far presents a puzzle: a hint for further research, where additional interviews or other instruments that assess emotional well-being might resolve, whether the emotional life of persons associated with the Communally Irreligious prototype is or is not characterised by heightened awareness of negative emotions, even outside a religious context.

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[511] #35: Feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal. (CI: 0; CA and ES: -2);

#69 Is burdened by a deep sense of guilt and personal inadequacy (CI: +1; CA and ES: 0)

#61 Feels threatened by evil forces at work in the world. (CI: +1; CA and ES: 0)

#63 Battles with inner impulses that are experienced as dark or evil (all prototypes: 0; CI has the highest z-score, but differences are small)

There is, however, one important aspect to experiential and emotional life, where the tables are turned: more than others, the Communally Irreligious recognise and appreciate those who share their worldview.

Communal Orientation: This prototype pays more attention to likeminded association than the others. Considering how this prototype rejects religion, it is no wonder that Communally Irreligious persons are not active, contributing members of some religious community (#97, -3). Neither is being religious or spiritual at the core of their identity (#16, -1). These features, however, do not mean that group-orientation would not be important: Persons of this prototype feel closest to those who share their outlook (#47, +2), and mainly associate with persons of the same worldview (#76, +1). Even though the original wording of the item #76 talks about associating mainly with persons of the same *religious* tradition, persons of this prototype have ranked this item almost at +2. The z-score examination reveals that the rank-order of this item is 26th, which is the highest ranked item in +1, or the first item that did not make it in +2. The contrast to the other prototypes regarding these two items is clear: The Communally Irreligious rank item #47 (feeling closest to those with the same outlook) at the 14th place, which is the first item that does not fit into +3-category. The Content Altruists rank the same item at 28th place, and the Experientially Spiritual at the 41st place. Likewise, whereas the Communally Irreligious rank #76 as the 26th most important - almost +2 - for the Content Altruist the same item ranks as 67th, and for the Experientially Spiritual as 43rd. In this instance, the investigation of the z-scores reveals a more marked difference, than merely investigating the column-differences in the factor arrays would have indicated. Since the rejection of religion is important for this prototype, it is safe to conclude that in line with the sorting instructions, persons of this prototype interpret the wording of this item (#76) to accommodate association with other people with irreligious inclinations. Clearly they do not mean association with religious people, as they themselves are alienated from religion.

Sometimes this alienation was with them already from early childhood: they describe their worldview being like one or both parents (#58, +2). The group-orientation gets indirect support by observing that this prototype is least opposed to moving from one religious group to another in search of a spiritual home (#72, -1; -4 and -2 for others). The contrast between the Communally Irreligious and the Content Altruist is particularly striking. Since it is clear that we are not talking about a spiritual or religious quest (#64, -2), the conclusion seems to be that persons of this prototype are oriented towards a group more than the other prototypes. Therefore, moving from one group to another to satisfy the social needs is not strongly rejected.

For the other prototypes, the relationship to groups is different: For the Content Altruists, involvement in or engagement with a religious organisation is sometimes possible, if the focus is on helping others. Philanthropic activities are important for the Content Altruists, and other people are seen as objects or recipients of help. This consideration sometimes overrides their non-religious sensibil-

ities. For the Experientially Spiritual, personal autonomy is important, and hence ideas that involve doing things mainly out of social reasons are rejected. This is not so for the Communally Irreligious: parental influences, likeminded association and feeling close to those who share their worldview all indicate that more than the other prototypes, they find relationships with people of the same worldview meaningful.

The examination has revealed sometimes small yet consistent distinctions that differentiate between the prototypes. It is now time to summarise the conclusions about the FQS results.

7.3.4 Summary of the Worldview Prototypes

A shared ground that defines the Finnish non-religious group-affiliates consists of 1) alienation from traditional religiosity; 2) secular humanistic disposition and 3) experiential dimension where feeling at home in the universe is combined with finding nourishment and sustenance in music, art and poetry. This commonality provides the background for observing different worldview prototypes. The commonality provides the big picture. An example related to tourism would be to investigate how the Nordic capitals Oslo, Stockholm and Helsinki in some ways resemble each other more than if any of them would be compared to a set of African capitals.

The next and in some ways more interesting step is to discover the local differences. It is here that we can see how Oslo, Stockholm and Helsinki are different from each other. What looked like small differences from a distance now become a matter of local identity with its own idiosyncrasies. The three main non-religious prototypes were named after their personal responses and engagements with FQS. It is important to keep in mind that the prototype names and characterisations reflect more patterns internal to the study at hand, than distinctions in a larger context.[512] What is clear is that all prototypes are relatively non-religious.

[512] An example of this is when the Communally Irreligious prototype is compared with one of the prototypes found in Johan Terho's study of conservative Christians. CI ranked two items that address communal orientation higher than the most communally oriented Christian prototype, even though the differences were not large. If the analysis was left at that, it would seem like CI is more communally oriented than conservative Christians, which would be a surprising result. Such a conclusion is unwarranted, since there are many items which address communal orientation with a religious wording, and get ranked much higher by Terho's respondents, and for obvious reasons get ranked lower by the CI than by some religious prototypes. To compare a communal orientation between different worldview traditions is therefore a complex matter. One would need an instrument where communal orientation is expressed in non/religiously neutral language. Since that is not the case with all FQS items that address this issue, I refrain from making any conclusions other than by observing that communal orientation is comparatively important for the CI prototype, at least within the affiliated non-religion in Finland. See Terho 2013: 64 and 99-104.

The different prototypes are approximations based on shared viewpoints that arise by analysing the many different individual sorts. No respondent corresponds 100% with any of the prototypes. A prototype is more like a cluster of priorities, where resemblance with a family of dispositions determines an individual's association or dissociation with a prototype. Nevertheless, the prototype descriptions arise from the choices made by the respondents, and are therefore more rooted in empirical findings than in pre-conceived notions about fixed worldview types that ought to exist somewhere in the world. This leads to the conclusion about the usefulness of FQS: whereas a group of nearly 80 respondents assembled in a non-random manner does not suffice to establish global generalisations, it can give hints to be confirmed by future research, and is sufficient to deconstruct existing generalisations, if they go against the empirical findings such as those of this study. It is like claiming: "Black, red and blue diamonds have been found, hence not all diamonds are white." Other studies are required to establish the presence and proportions of such gems in certain geographical locations.

I conclude this section by illustrating the notable features of and differences between the three prototypes in a table-form. The table is meant to enable easy comparisons between the key areas of the three worldview prototypes.

Themes	P1: Content Altruist	P2: Experientially Spiritual	P3: Communally Irreligious
Emotions and experiences	Stability; contentment **values:** *music, art, poetry *nature	Meaningful positive experiences **values:** *music, art, poetry *nature *spiritual experiences *spiritual practices	Awareness of negative emotions *irritated about religion **values:** *music, art, poetry *like-minded company
Social orientation	Universalism Activism	Individualism Self-actualisation	In-group Activism
Religion and spirituality	Moderate rejection	Spiritual but not Religious	Consistent rejection

13. Summary of the prototypes[513]

513 The three instantiations on the social orientation dimension reflect the differences between these prototypes. To place these orientations in a more global context, more nuanced descriptions might be necessary. The universalism of the Content Altruist prototype means that persons of this prototype are likely to feel connectedness to others, regardless in-group considerations. Individualism can be further investigated on another dimension which ranges between the opposite poles of self-transcendence and self-enhancement. Neither the FQS nor interviews indicated that the Experientially Spiritual respondents would be geared towards personal achievement and competition that would be characteristic of the self-enhancement orientation. It seems, therefore, that their individualism is more of a self-transcendent type, which allows for connectedness with others, without in-group considerations. The Communally Irreligious are clearly the least individualistic, and also least universalistic of the three prototypes. In other words, their feeling of connectedness is likely to manifest within their group. An excellent discussion about the various modalities of interpersonal orientation can be found in Lassander 2009: 14-17 and 2014: 101-120. The samples of these studies consist of London Open University students and of contemporary Pagans from three countries.

8. INSIGHTS INTO THE PROTOTYPES FROM THE INTERVIEWS

The differences between worldview prototypes can be compressed into three dimensions: 1) relationship to religion and spirituality; 2) social and societal orientation; and 3) emotional or experiential life. The Content Altruists are activists with a universalist orientation, who are mostly content with their life. The major exception to the contentment is religion, which, however, can be tolerated and even appreciated if its ideals and practices are seen as beneficial. The Experientially Spiritual individuals are geared towards meaningful positive experiences and openness to spirituality, often involving personal practices. They reject group-oriented, ritualistic and Abrahamic religion, whereas religious art and experiences that are better characterised by either strong emotions or a peacefully meditational state of mind are approved, even endeavoured. Societally, this prototype is the most individualistic of the three. The Communally Irreligious reject religion and spirituality consistently, and appreciate like-minded association. Emotionally, they share the same positive sources of nourishment as the others, with the additional feature of relishing the company of people who share their worldview. They are also slightly more aware of negative emotions than the others.

In the chapter preceding the introduction of the FQS prototypes, I presented a general characterisation of the respondents based on the interviews. The themes in that chapter were

1) *institutional affiliation*: the main reasons for affiliation were activism, group-support, ideological reasons, and without preference
2) *personal worldview stories*: the emerging themes were stable narrative, deconversion from religiosity, and moving towards spirituality
3) *identities*: the prominent self-identifications were atheist and non-religious
4) *words of inspiration*: prominent source of inspiration was contemporary non-religious voices (New Atheist authors; Finnish spokespersons; magazines; public campaigns) and a minor source religious or spiritual texts and teachings
5) *attitudes towards religion*: Prominent themes were criticism or appreciation towards particular forms of religion, and reasons for rejecting or appreciating religion. Forms of religion contained appreciation towards Finnish religion, and criticism of Islam and American religion. Reasons for rejecting religion were religion being in conflict with science, rationality and morality. Some aspects of religion did nevertheless deserve appreciation - something I will elaborate more in the following.
6) *emotions and experiences with religion*: the continuum from negative through mixed or neutral to positive emotions and experiences was observed.

I will now analyse the above topics by prototype. This will enable us to understand the prototypes better, whereas the initial look at the interviews gave us an idea about all respondents as a group. Since I will now only consider those respondents who defined a prototype by loading significantly

on it and not others, the voices of those respondents who were not the defining individuals for the prototypes are left out. I will also introduce three more topics that are salient for a comprehensive worldview assessment. Societal and social concerns and the relationship to spirituality are topics that are directly addressed in the prototype descriptions, and hence, of importance. The last topic is about the non-human world: environmental issues, animal rights and positive experiences in natural environment belong here. This theme is addressed by some FQS items, but not directly in the prototype descriptions. I want to take a closer look at this topic, since it is a major component in some worldview theories.[514]

8.1 Institutional Affiliation by Prototype

Freethinkers is the most popular non-religious affiliation in all three prototypes. This is most visible with the Content Altruists: all 16 defining respondents were affiliated with Freethinkers. Four Content Altruists held multiple affiliations: Freethinkers combined with Skepsis, Humanists and Protu, with one or two instantiations with each. It is similar with the Communally Irreligious prototype: 17 of the 20 defining respondents were affiliated with Freethinkers. In this prototype, seven respondents held multiple affiliations, whereas two had no affiliation. Ten respondents held a single affiliation. Skepsis became an important secondary affiliation in this prototype: six Communally Irreligious respondents were affiliated with Skepsis as well as with Freethinkers, whereas two respondents were affiliated with Freethinkers and Humanists and two with Freethinkers and Protu. The Experientially Spiritual prototype has seven Freethinkers out of the 11 defining respondents. Where the Experientially Spiritual respondents differ markedly from the other prototypes is with multiple affiliations: there was only one multiple affiliation amongst the defining respondents.

When the defining respondents' interviews are analysed regarding the reasons for their chosen affiliation, it turns out that both for the Content Altruists and for the Communally Irreligious, activistic motivation prevails: seven Content Altruists, one Experientially Spiritual and eight Communally Irreligious respondents motivated their chosen affiliation by activism, whereas group-support was mentioned as a reason for affiliation by only one Communally Irreligious and by none from the other prototypes. The importance of group-support was mentioned in the interviews in contexts other than addressing the name of one's chosen affiliation(s). It is therefore likely that for those who named the importance of group-support, it also influenced their decision to affiliate in the first place. It is more difficult to say why a particular non-religious organisation was preferred over another. Two Content Altruists, one Experientially Spiritual and two Communally Irreligious motivated their affiliations with ideological reasons. Three Content Altruists affiliated accidentally, or for pragmatic reasons without particular preference. None of the Experientially Spiritual and the Communally Irreligious respondents fell under this category.

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514 Redfield (Naugle 2002: 245-249); Koltko-Rivera 2004: 35; Manninen 1977: 16-17

	CA (N=16)	ES (N=11)	CI (N=20)
Freethinkers	16	7	17
Skepsis	2	1	6
Humanists	1	1	2
Protu	2	2	2
Atheists	-	-	-
No reported affiliation	-	1	2
Religious affiliation	-	1	-
Multiple affiliations	4	1	7
Single affiliation	12	9	10
Activism reasons	7	1	8
Group-support reasons	-	-	1
Ideological reasons	2	1	2
Incidental or without preference	3	-	-

14. Affiliations by prototype

Three features stand out in the investigation of affiliations and prototypes. The first one is the relationship between multiple and single affiliations. Multiple affiliations is not popular amongst the Experientially Spiritual: nine respondents held a single affiliation, one held two and one held none. 12 out 16 Content Altruists held a single affiliation, and four held multiple affiliations. 10 out of 20 those affiliated with the Communally Irreligious had a single affiliation, two held none, and seven held multiple affiliations. Perhaps the individualistic orientation makes persons associated with the Experientially Spiritual prototype less likely to affiliate than persons associated with the other prototypes. The focus on societal action would explain why some Content Altruists want to affiliate with more than one organisation. Likewise, the importance of rejecting religion for the Communally

Irreligious would explain why some of them think it is important to be affiliated in several organisations that advance the non-religious cause. The second feature that seems to follow the pattern of the first one is that just as the Experientially Spiritual affiliate less than the other prototypes, there were only a few cases where motivation for their affiliation was provided. It seems that compared to the other prototypes, affiliation is of less importance for them. The third feature is the fact that Skepsis emerges as the most important co-affiliation for the Communally Irreligious. This is understandable, considering that the dominant reason for criticising or rejecting religion, given by persons associated with the Communally Irreligious, is religion's falsity. I will elaborate on this topic later when I present the reasons for rejecting or approving religion by prototype. It is good to mention this already now, since out of the organisations, Skepsis is the one that most directly focuses on taking a critical look at false claims about reality. It therefore makes sense that a focus on religion's falsity goes hand in hand with affiliating with an organisation that wants to advance critical investigation of false or dubious claims.

We can conclude by pointing out an anomaly: the above examination is about non-religious affiliations. Out of all respondents in this study, three were affiliated with a religious organisation.[515] Two of them are members of the Lutheran church, although, according to them, their membership was due to social and familial reasons and had nothing to do with their personal beliefs.[516] I mention this as a matter of curiosity. These "Lutheran" respondents do not define any of the prototypes. One defining respondent, however, is affiliated with a religious organisation that does not represent Abrahamic monotheism.[517] From the interview it became clear that the affiliation is a matter of personal preference, rather than due to social factors. This respondent is associated with the Experientially Spiritual prototype. As we will see, what is an anomaly with affiliations becomes more prominent when we turn to the worldview narratives and identities.

8.2 Worldview Stories by Prototype

Some respondents talked about their worldview development, others did not. Narrative information was available for a majority of the defining respondents: 14 Content Altruists, 10 Experientially Spiritual and 15 Communally Irreligious talked about their personal stories. I found three distinct patterns of worldview development. First, the stable narrative, where religion never played a dominant role. Either the family had been nominally Christian, in which case there had never been much personal religiosity other than a childhood faith, or the respondent had grown up in a non-religious family. Non-religiosity had been there throughout the adolescence and adult life. Second, deconversion: turning away from a religious outlook held in adolescence or adulthood. At one point, the faith

[515] The respondents who reported religious affiliation also reported at least one non-religious affiliation. There were additionally three respondents who reported no non-religious affiliation, and no religious affiliation either.

[516] JK1014

[517] JK1053

was given up and replaced by non-religion. The dividing line between the first and the second type of narrative is how the respondent spoke about his or her worldview in adolescence or adulthood. Persons who may have believed in God or been involved with religious practices in childhood are found in both types, whereas such involvement in adolescence or adulthood is what distinguishes the deconversion narratives from the stable ones. Third, turning towards spirituality: the familial background may have been non-religious or Christian. In both cases, an increasing interest towards spirituality can be observed, and in some cases this interest is in non-Abrahamic religious traditions.

When I examined the respondents that define the prototypes, I found that the Experientially Spiritual differs from the other two prototypes. Both the Content Altruist and the Communally Irreligious narratives are dominated by stable stories. For the Content Altruists, 11 narratives could best be described as stable, whereas three were deconversion narratives. It was almost the same for the Communally Irreligious respondents: 13 stable and two deconversions. The Experientially Spiritual had six narratives of moving towards spirituality, more than stable (four) and deconversion (one) narratives combined in this prototype. Two of these narratives involved a change from previously held Christianity towards spirituality.[518] In two narratives the interest towards spirituality developed from a non-religious background.[519] With two respondents I was not able to determine whether their previous background was Christian, non-religious, or something else.[520]

The following table illustrates the narratives by prototype:

	CA (N=16)	ES (N=11)	CI (N=20)
stable	11	4	13
deconversion	3	1	2
towards spirituality	-	6	-

15. Worldview stories by prototype

The difference between the prototypes is that moving towards spirituality is non-existent amongst the Content Altruist and Communally Irreligious narratives, whereas it is the dominant type for the

[518] JK1002; JK1051

[519] JK1038; JK1053

[520] JK1023; JK1075

Experientially Spiritual. For the Content Altruist and Communally Irreligious prototypes, the stable narrative dominates.

8.3 Identities by Prototype

Like with worldview narratives, inquiry into the identities of the respondents was not done in a systematic fashion. In some interviews, identity came up, in others it did not. Across the prototypes, information about identity is available for 12 out of the 16 Content Altruists, five out of the 11 Experientially Spiritual, and 12 out of the 20 Communally Irreligious. Some respondents specified multiple self-identifications: four Content Altruists, two Experientially Spiritual and two Communally Irreligious. For the Content Altruists and Communally Irreligious, the most popular identity tag was atheist (five for Content Altruists, and four for Communally Irreligious). There were only two self-identified atheists amongst the Experientially Spiritual. Non-religious self-identification was almost as popular for two prototypes: five for Content Altruist, three for Commually Irreligious. This was not so for the Experientially Spiritual, where only one respondent self-identified as non-religious.

It is difficult to to elaborate much on these figures. It becomes easier to see a pattern, when many minor self-identifications are combined. We could consider sceptics, secularists, freethinkers, humanists, materialists, rationalists, darwinists and those with a scientific worldview to represent aspects of the larger pool of non-religious identities. Likewise, we could combine Buddhist, pantheist, and those with an open worldview to form another group of identities that are *other than non-religious*. It would be tempting to call Buddhist identity religious. I refrain from doing so here, since some respondents who held sympathies towards Buddhism seemed to consider it different from religion. Agnostic identity can be placed in the middle of the non/religious divide, to be specified by the context whether it would tilt on one side more than the other.

Non-religious identities dominate the Content Altruist prototype, where all 12 respondents who specified identities held non-religious identities, atheist being the most popular. For the Communally Irreligious, there is a little more ambiguity. 12 respondents specified their identities, but three were agnostics and one held an open worldview, refusing to fit into existing worldview categories. By investigation it turned out that the agnostics were of three different kinds. One was open to the possibility that some kind of power, perhaps another civilisation, could explain things on planet earth.[521] Another one combined the agnostic identity with the self-description "hard atheist."[522] The third respondent was the only one who seemed to be situationally open to the existence of a higher

[521] JK1006

[522] FP1002

intelligence that has power to guide the events in our lives.[523] It seems, therefore, that only in one case does agnostic identity for the Communally Irreligious respondents mean a compromise to the general theme of rejection of religion.

The notable feature in the discovery amongst Experientially Spiritual respondents is that out of the five respondents who specified their self-identifications, three gave other than non-religious identities: one with an open worldview, one Buddhist, and one who self-identified both as a pantheist and as a Buddhist. This is understandable by the information we have about this prototype: openness to spirituality is combined with the rejection of group-oriented, ritualistic and authoritarian religion. The most likely examples of what is rejected is Christianity, or more broadly Abrahamic religions. Such a selective rejection does not seem to rule out openness to Buddhism, which one respondent directly distinguished from religion: Buddhism is not a religion, but belongs to the domain of spirituality and, hence, approvable. Religion, exemplified by Christianity is rejected.[524] It ought to be mentioned also, that of those respondents who define the Experientially Spiritual prototype and did not specify a self-identification, two nevertheless expressed clear interest in Buddhism. Amongst the respondents who define the other two prototypes no such interest could be discerned.

	CA (N=16)	ES (N=11)	CI (N=20)
total number of respondents who expressed identities	12	5	12
atheist	5	2	4
non-religious	5	1	4
other non-religious	9	-	5
agnostic	-	-	3
non-religious identities combined	19	3	13
other than non-religious	-	4	1 or 2 (see footnote in the end of this section for explanation)
respondents with multiple identities	4	2	3
single identities	8	3	9

16. Identities by prototype

[523] JK1040

[524] JK1051

It seems that the Content Altruists are most at ease to speak about their identities, which are without exception non-religious. Likewise, the Communally Irreligious mostly identify as non-religious, whereas less than half of the Experientially Spiritual use identity tags, which in more than half of the cases are other than non-religious. The identity tags used by the Experientially Spiritual respondents are not religious either, except in one case. Non-religious identities are found in all prototypes, but the pattern with the Experientially Spiritual is notably different from the other prototypes, where other than non-religious identities are non-existent or rare.[525]

8.4 Sources of Inspiration by Prototype

I divide this section into three themes. The first theme is inspiration derived from non-religious publications and spokespersons that are directly critical towards religion: New Atheism, prominent Finnish authors, various magazines published by non-religious organisations as well as older, classic works. The second theme consists of academic interest in religion, or interest in religion to be better equipped to either challenge believers or defend one's own stance. I call this type of interest "reversed" interest in religion: the interest is not motivated by personally felt religiosity; rather, religion is studied in order to challenge the believers. I have also included here those whose interest seems to be closer to academic curiosity rather than preparation for a challenge. The third theme is direct inspiration derived from religious, spiritual or New Age literature or prominent persons. I left out any references to influences of a previously held worldview: if a respondent reported having read the Bible in her youth, when she was Christian, but nowadays would not do so, having turned atheist, I have not included such no longer relevant inspiration.

Ten persons defining the Content Altruist-prototype, seven defining the Experientially Spiritual and six defining the Communally Irreligious elaborated on their sources of inspiration. These sources were divided across the prototypes as follows:

[525] The one Communally Irreligious respondent who identified as having an open worldview, also identified as non-religious. The rest of the interview does not point to a spiritual interest in the same way as for the respondents in the Experientially Spiritual prototype. Another Communally Irreligious respondent who self-identified as agnostic, could be classified as situationally other than non-religious. If both of these respondents were classified as other than non-religious, the total number of other than non-religious respondents would be 2.

this table lists instances from interviews, and does not classify individual respondents into categories	CA	ES	CI
Non-religious inspiration (New Atheism, magazines etc)	6	3	5
Reversed or academic interest in religion	**4**	-	2
Religious or spiritual inspiration	-	5	-
Total	10 (2 multiple)	7 (1 multiple)	6 (1 multiple)

17. Sources of inspiration by prototype

Some respondents reported multiple sources of inspiration. The numbers are small, yet they reveal a pattern that resembles the previous findings: Experientially Spiritual prototype differs from the other two. There were no instances with religious or spiritual inspiration in the other two prototypes, whereas in the Experientially Spiritual there were five. In other words, the majority of the reported sources of inspiration in this prototype were of religious or spiritual nature. Conversely, the Experientially Spiritual respondents did not report interest in or inspiration from studying religious scriptures out of academic interest, or to challenge believers. The other two prototypes did. A second observation about the small numbers is that the Communally Irreligious do not seem to talk much about their sources of inspiration, although if they do, the religiously critical voices are the most popular ones.

Let us now examine how the respondents who define the prototypes view religion: What forms of religion, if any, are singled out? Why is religion rejected, if it is? And what are the notable experiences and emotions with religion?

8.5 Differentiation from Religion 1: Forms of Religion by Prototype

Previously we have seen that none of the respondents considered the Finnish religiosity to be bad, when compared with other countries. Some went further by stating that Finnish religiosity may well be amongst the best of the available options.We also observed that American religiosity and Islam were the prime candidates, if the respondents were to single out particularly problematic manifestations of religion. In the national context, the general dissatisfaction was directed towards the state giving privileges to the Lutheran and Orthodox churches. This is what is viewed as problematic, even though the religious traditions in themselves would be regarded as relatively harmless. References to problematic national minorities were few, particularly when the examination was constrained to the respondents that define the prototypes.

The Content Altruists found Islam as problematic in three instances, followed by all religions (two), American religiosity (one), Catholic church (one), Abrahamic religion (one) and Finnish minorities (one). Since some respondents targeted more than one tradition, the total number of Content Altruists who specified what forms of religion they particularly reject becomes five. The Experientially Spiritual found Islam and Abrahamic religions as problematic once for each. These were different individuals, so the total number of individuals who specified particular forms of religion for this prototype is also two. The Communally Irreligious found problems with Islam (four), all religions[526] (four), American religiosity (three), Abrahamic religions (one) and Finnish minorities (one). For this prototype, the total number of individuals that specified problematic forms of religion is eight. It is difficult to interpret these figures, since the rang-order of instances by prototype reflects the sizes of the prototypes.

The examination about instances where forms of religion are named because they are *acceptable* will, however, hint at an underlying pattern. The largest prototype in terms of the number of defining respondents, the Communally Irreligious, encompasses only one instance where a respondent singles out a positive form of religion: Swedish theology that, according to the respondent, has been progressive.[527] The second largest prototype is the Content Altruist, where three respondents single out forms of religion in a positive spirit. The smallest prototype by defining respondents, the Experientially Spiritual, has most instances -eight out of 11 - where a form of religion is specified as a positive or acceptable example. The negative and positive forms of religion can be presented by prototype in a table:

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[526] I have included in the category of all religions one respondent who spoke about all book religions, because the distinction between religions with texts and those without texts is only mentioned in a few interviews, and in none of these cases is it a prominent theme of non-religion. The discussion about religion overall is focused on text-based religions.

[527] JK1040; progressive in terms of rejecting the concept of hell, according to the respondent.

this table lists instances from interviews, and does not classify individual respondents into categories	CA	ES	CI
America as problem	1	-	3
Islam as problem	3	1	4
Catholicism as problem	1	-	-
Abrahamic religions as problems	1	1	1
All religions as problems	2	-	4
National minorities as problems	1	-	1
Finland, Sweden or Scandinavia ok	2	-	1
France ok	1	-	-
Buddhism ok	-	5	-
All religions ok	1	4	-
Negative combined	9	2	13
Acceptable combined	4	9	1

18. Forms of religion criticised or approved by prototype

When both examinations are combined, it seems that the Communally Irreligious prototype deserves its name. Conversely, the Experientially Spiritual respondents seem to find fewer problematic instances of religion than the others, and more positive instances. Furthermore, when we examine

what forms of religion are considered acceptable, it turns out that in five cases the respondents are talking about Buddhism, and in an additional three instances about all religions.[528] No other religious traditions were singled out by the Experientially Spiritual. It seems, then, that the approval of Buddhism, either indirectly as part of all religions or directly by being singled out, is a prominent attitude in this prototype. Neither Content Altruists nor Communally Irreligious specified Buddhism negatively or approvingly.

8.6 Differentiation from Religion 2: Reasons for Rejecting Religion by Prototype

When the reasons for rejecting religion are analysed by prototype, it becomes clear that the respondents hold a notable common ground of reasons for differentiating from religion. Most defining respondents for all prototypes had something critical to say about religion. To simplify the analysis, I have divided the reasons for rejecting religion into three categories. The first one is *falsity*: religion contradicts science, or is irrational, or both. Or, as one respondent put it: "...none of the existing religions are true"[529], without specifying why. The second one is based on religions harmful *effects*: religion leads to inferior morality, violence, or is used to control people. The third category consists of depicting the *character* of the religious person in inferior terms: the faithful are compared to alcoholics or they are assumed to suffer from a form of insanity, intellectual laziness, or lack of responsibility.

Falsity-arguments were most popular amongst the Communally Irreligious, where 15 out of all 20 respondents argued against religion in this way. The corresponding numbers for the Content Altruists is 10 (out of 16), and for the Experientially Spiritual three (11). Effects-arguments were most popular amongst the Content Altruists, 12 out of 16, whereas the numbers for the other prototypes are 10 (20) for the Communally Irreligious and five (12) for the Experientially Spiritual. Character-arguments were used by five Communally Irreligious, two Experientially Spiritual and two Content Altruists. When multiple arguments are considered, it turns out that only a few respondents voiced no criticisms against religion in the interviews. All respondents defining the Content Altruist prototype voiced criticisms. Two Experientially Spiritual voiced no criticisms. Thus far, it comes as the greatest surprise in this chapter that in this regard, the Communally Irreligious lead the field: three respondents were uncritical in the interviews. It must be remembered, however, that this is also the largest prototype by defining respondents. Nevertheless, I did not expect to find several instances of no voiced criticisms in this prototype.

To summarise, effects-arguments is the most prominent for the Content Altruists and Experientially Spiritual, whereas falsity-arguments are dominant for the Communally Irreligious. The latter observation is in line with what we know about affiliations in the Communally Irreligious prototype.

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[528] One respondent (JK1053) talked approvingly about both Buddhism and all religions.

[529] JK1006

There are altogether nine respondents who define one of the prototypes and who are affiliated with Skepsis. Out of these, there are six Skepsis affiliates in the Communally Irreligious prototype, making Skepsis the second largest affiliation for this prototype, and the largest secondary affiliation. This is considerably more than in the other prototypes, and it seems to be in line with the observation that persons of Communally Irreligious prototype are more likely to reject religion based on its falsity. This would be expected from those with interest in Skepsis, considering that the organisation's focus is on scientifically unfounded truth claims. It seems, then, that the information we have about affiliations with the the Communally Irreligious prototype is in line with its rejection of religion based on its falsity.

I conclude by mentioning a curiosity, which becomes more prominent when I investigate the instances where religion was appreciated. This is the use of conjunctions and other verbal devises, placed after the argument, to qualify and tone down what was being said. I exemplify this with two instances where criticisms were tamed immediately after they were raised. When Kari comments on item #60 (Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires) which he placed at +2, he says:

> ...not only religion but all other isms and ideologies. There is no particular difference in religion.[530]

Kari qualifies the idea expressed by the original FQS statement, placing religions in a larger context. It is no longer about singling out religion as a problem, but rather religion becoming a subcategory of isms and ideologies. Likewise, Tuija starts with the character-argument:

> I have a personal feeling that if someone is deeply religious, it is a little like having a mental disorder, that it is not so much real.

Then she adds this:

> But there are these stories when someone became a believer and was saved from a vicious circle with jail or drugs, and things like that. In my opinion all paths to the mountain are allowed. Who am I to say what is right for someone. Particularly if it does not harm another person in any way.[531]

What started as critical ended up being moderately respectful. With the critical views, this is a curiosity: only two respondents, both Experientially Spiritual, tamed their criticisms in this way. In the following section, where I investigate the instances where the respondents found value in religion, we will see much more occurrences of qualifiers.

Instead of presenting a summary in a table form here, I will do so after I have presented the results about religion's value.

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[530] JK1053

[531] JK1063

Valuable Religion by Prototype: Here I will present the instances where the respondents found some value in religion. To simplify, I use four categories: Instead of false, the religious *teachings* are attributed *relevance*. Instead of producing harmful effects, religion's *beneficial effects* are mentioned: religion supports commendable ethics on the individual level, and religious institutions do good on the societal level. *Personal support* refers to religion's ability to give solace and support for the individual. A fourth category is related to *experiences*: religious art, music and architecture are sources of inspiration for some, and others report experiences that sound very much like religious experiences, although without the religious ideological framework.[532]

Religious *teachings* were considered *relevant* by two Content Altruists, and by only one Communally Irreligious. The contrast to the Experientially Spiritual is visible: Six defining respondents found some religious teachings valuable. When it comes to religion's *beneficial effects*, one Content Altruist, two Experientially Spiritual and five Communally Irreligious mentioned how religion sometimes does some real good in the world. Religion was seen as a source of *personal support* by three Content Altruists, two Experientially Spiritual, and five Communally Irreligious. Finally, religion was seen as a source of inspiring *experiences* by one Content Altruist and four Experientially Spiritual. Additionally, two Experientially Spiritual respondents discussed rewarding experiences in the context of meditation, without any reference to religion. No Communally Irreligious respondents reported such experiences.

So far the investigation about valuable religion shows surprising results: whereas I expected that the Experientially Spiritual would find value in the realm of experiences, I was surprised that only one Content Altruist emphasised religion's ability to produce beneficial effects. I expected that the altruistic focus of this prototype would translate into more instances of altruism found across the worldview borders. It is also not a big surprise that it is the Experientially Spiritual that have most interest in religious teachings, which in more than half of the cases was in the context of Buddhism, Taoism and New Age.[533] The surprise here is the amount of positivity found amongst the Communally Irreligious, which have so far shown the clearest disposition towards rejecting religion. If multiple instances are considered, it turns out that five Content Altruists, nine Experientially Spiritual and nine Communally Irreligious found value in some aspects of religion.

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[532] Considering the notable sympathies some respondents expressed towards Buddhism - to the extent of some respondents identifying as Buddhists of some kind - it may sound odd when I state that religious experiences are without religious framework. I admit it is a reasonable hypothesis that indeed some of the experiences that seem to be similar to religious experiences might be interpreted within a Buddhist frame of reference by some respondents. I have decided not to make such an interpretation because of two reasons. The first one is that in these interviews, in the words of the respondents there is a visible differentiation from what they call religion. For these respondents, it is therefore not a religious experience. Another reason is related to context specificity: the instances where respondents discuss enlightenment experiences, I found no convincing reason to conclude that the respondents themselves are regarding their experiences particularly Buddhistic. Therefore, I want to bracket out such conclusions.

[533] One respondent (JK1038) seemed to find value both in the Bible and New Age. If this respondent is counted in, the number becomes four out of six finding value in non-Abrahamic religiosity.

A further examination of interviews suggests a resolution to the dilemma about the expressed positivity towards religion amongst Communally Irreligious. It turns out that only two of the nine Communally Irreligious respondents attributed value to religion without taming it afterwards with qualifying statements. Most of the defining respondents who noted some aspect of religion as acceptable, continued, afterwards, as if they wanted to make sure that their overall picture of religion is not a bright one, despite having mentioned something positive. Pertti names a number of cases where religious institutions or individuals do good, yet the framework itself is problematic:

> Things like the gorgeousness of the churches contradict the basic idea of helping those in need and championing for peace, which are in themselves positive things, then they acquire such by-products which do not fit in...such contradictions undermine the religious system's credibility. Even though good work is done, it is easy to break the basis.[534]

Or consider Matti, who first states that sometimes the acts of religious people do not meet the religious ideals. When I asked him whether the problem is in the ideals or in their implementation, he replies:

> Ideals are also faulty. Perhaps the biggest problem is that thinking is left out, people read in a book what is right action without thinking about it, without finding out. People believe in books and religious leaders who say something, and when it has been said, that is it. That is the basis of action. That is part of religion. Most book-religions...incorporate respect for authorities and believing without questioning.

Later he continues on the same topic:

> Sometimes, for providing guidance in life it [religion] can be good, it is not self-evident that all activity that is guided by religion would be wrong. There must be a lot of tacit knowledge that has been incorporated, good guidelines and morality. *However,* [italics added] these instructions are not born out of religion, rather they are models of action developed by evolution that have then been described in religions.[535]

It seems that for Matti, any expressed approval of religion is preceded by criticism, and afterwards qualified by adding that the positive effects are really not religious after all, but something else. These are just some examples of the general pattern: it almost seems as if the respondents feel it to be too politically incorrect to say that religion is categorically bad. Incidental references are made to the benefits of religion, yet these are afterwards qualified to reiterate the broader framework, where religion is a problem. This structure appears much less in the interviews of those who define the

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[534] JK1026. He does, however, specify one positive instance without any qualifiers: the fact that church has taught people to read and write. This is in the middle of the interview, and cannot in any way be interpreted as qualifying the overall negative tone of the interview. Whereas most qualifiers discussed in this section seem to be making sure that the appreciation is understood as an exception that confirms the rule, in Pertti's case the one exception really is an exception.

[535] JK1020

other prototypes: I found two such instances amongst the Content Altruists, and one amongst the Experientially Spiritual. On the other hand, the same structure in its reversed form was observed in two cases in the context where the Experientially Spiritual respondents spoke critically about religion, after which these respondents toned down their critical observations.

There were some anomalies, however, and I found one even amongst the Communally Irreligious. Ville, who has previously described his attitude towards religion as aggressive, changes his tone in the end of the interview when he contrasts his own organisation with religious groups:

> Religion gives much more, there is the atmosphere of doing something together. We have this organisational engagement that we mostly take part in the meetings and that does not give you anything.[536]

Where most Communally Irreligious used qualifiers to tame appreciation, Ville is the exception who does the opposite: he ends the discussion with a positive note. Another respondent amongst the Content Altruists first stated that religion is used for political purposes, and such usage is far less noble than the original religious teachings. He continued to give examples about how Jesus exemplified an anti-capitalistic spirit, and concludes that the original point of departure of religion is worthy of appreciation.[537] In this case, the original purity of the religion is used to modify criticism towards its present misuse, whereas for Ville, the social support of religion modifies his previous critical remarks. Such anomalies help us remember that even the defining respondents only correspond to the prototypes to some extent, not 100%.[538]

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[536] PN1005

[537] JK1035

[538] The possibility for 100% resemblance is mostly theoretical, except when Q-method is used to investigate individual persons. In such studies the factor equals the individual's own point of view.

this table lists instances from interviews, and does not classify individual respondents into categories	CA	ES	CI
Falsity	10	3	15
Effects	12	5	10
Derogatory characterisation	2	2	5
Qualified criticism	1	2	1

19. Critical arguments against religion by prototype

In this table, all criticisms are individual instantiations: the same respondent may be included in the figures of more than one cell. Hence, the number of instantiations is larger than the number of individuals expressing criticisms. All Content Altruists (N=16) criticised religion. Eight out of the total 11 Experientially Spiritual and 18 out the total 20 Communally Irreligious criticised religion.
Some inter-prototype differences notwithstanding, all prototypes criticise religion for both its falsity and its effects, and to a lesser degree, use derogatory characterisation of a religious person. The critical perceptions do not present a notable differentiation between the prototypes, whereas the other part of the investigation, appreciating or approving religion does.

this table lists instances from interviews, and does not classify individual respondents into categories	CA	ES	CI
Valuable teachings	2	6	1
Contributes to welfare and ethics	1	2	5
Personal support	3	2	5
Experiences	1	6	-
Qualified approval	2	1	8

20. Reasons for approving religion by prototype

Like in the previous table, even here the numbers indicate instantiations, where the same respondent may be the source of multiple appreciations. Six out of sixteen Content Altruists, and nine out of 20 Communally Irreligious found something positive to say about religion. The difference between these prototypes and the Experientially Spiritual is clear: all Experientially Spiritual respondents (N=11) found something positive in religions. Whereas the Content Altruists and Communally Irreligious are more critical than appreciative of religion, for the Experientially Spiritual the reverse is true: there are more instances of appreciation than criticism in the Experientially Spiritual prototype.

It is in line with the prototype characterisation of the Experientially Spiritual that this prototype appreciates religion as a source of experiences. Here we can see that even teachings are valued by this prototype, despite the fact that they reject religious rules. Even though the Communally Irreligious respondents find something positive to say about religion, these instances are in eight out of 11 cases qualified after the appreciation. It seems that the appreciations are more a matter of political correctness.

8.7 Emotions, Experiences and Religion by Prototype

A notable feature that distinguishes the prototypes consists of emotional dispositions and experiences. We have seen a variety ranging from fear and irritation through neutral or ambivalent to feeling elated and inspired by some aspects of religious life. Even though the prototypes have been defined by different emotional dispositions, the prototypes are family resemblances, shared by real respondents to various degrees. It will be interesting to see, whether and how the emotional orientations that are found in the prototype descriptions are actualised when the respondents who define these prototypes express their experiences and emotions with religion.

It needs to be mentioned at the outset that some respondents did not use almost any emotional or experiential qualifiers when they discussed religion. Such respondents are not included in the following investigation, even though their sorting patterns with FQS have revealed something about their emotional preferences. Five Content Altruists, one Experientially Spiritual and five Communally Irreligious respondents did not use emotional expressions to the extent that I would have considered it to be motivated to include them in the following analysis.

Let us see how the verbalised emotional and experiential expressions are distributed across the prototypes. I have divided the investigation into three domains. The first one is about emotional interview content that is predominantly negative. Feelings of fear, experiences of intimidation, irritation and anger belong to this domain. When a respondent stated:"...I feel uncomfortable with religion, because I think it is a scary phenomenon"[539] and did not contradict such a disposition with other, more positive notes, it was easy to classify the interview as emotionally negative. In other cases, the predominantly negative mood was interrupted by an exception. Tiina, for instance, recollects how she felt anxiety when as a child she read stories about early Christian martyrs. Now she feels irritated about the visibility of religion in school, media and Finnish society. The contradictions she finds in Christian teachings are likewise a source of irritation for her. Yet, in the middle of the interview, she mentions how she once visited the home of her religious friend in the context of celebrating the coming of Christmas, and describes the occasion as warm. This was the only instance where her emotional reaction towards religion was not negative.[540] I have therefore classified the interview and others like that in the negative category.

In many cases, however, it was more difficult to decide what would be the predominant mood. If there was no clear indication either way, I have categorised the interview in the neutral or ambivalent category. A typical example of ambivalence is an Experientially Spiritual respondent, who felt intimidated by Christianity, and found solace in Buddhism. In other cases, it would be more appropriate to talk about neutrality or stability rather than ambivalence. The difference between neutral or stable respondents and those who were not included in the investigation is that the respondents that

[539] FP1005

[540] JK1027

I have categorised as neutral did talk about emotions. Unlike those who were not included, the neutral respondents' data about emotions was available. I give one example to illustrate a neutral emotion:

> I am quite distanced from the religious, not a member in any institution, nor have I experienced anything that would have to do with religious feelings. I have never experienced any intensive feeling...[541]

Here the respondent does speak about feelings in the context of religion, by stating never having experienced any. In other cases, a respondent talked about religion as irrelevant or meaningless, without a concomitant emotional expression such as being irritated that would make it easier to place the interview in the category of negative emotions.

The category of positive emotions and experiences is reserved for those interviews, where the respondent used positive emotional expressions exclusively, or in the majority of the instances.

Negative emotions are found in all prototypes, yet this feature is most notable in the Communally Irreligious prototype, where 13 out of 20 respondents fit best into this category.
seven out of 16 Content Altruists and two out of 11 Experientially Spiritual could likewise be best described as having a negative emotional or experiential disposition towards religion. Neutral or ambivalent tone was observed amongst two Content Altruists, four Experientially Spiritual, and two Communally Irreligious. Religion was experienced in predominantly positive terms by four Experientially Spiritual and one Content Altruist, but no Communally Irreligious respondents.

As we saw previously, the instances where the Communally Irreligious respondents have something positive to say about religion are mostly qualified by other statements so that the overall picture remains critical. Some, however, refrained from critical comments, and others did not discuss any negative feelings or experiences with religion. Even though the Experientially Spiritual prototype is defined by positive experiences, which may take place in a religious framework, it is also important to know that some individuals who defined this prototype discussed their feelings and experiences with religion in a negative way. Another feature of the Experientially Spiritual respondents that was revealed by this investigation was related to Buddhism. Whereas persons associated with this prototype seem to appreciate Buddhism more than other religions, the investigation about predominant emotional and experiential dispositions reveals that it is not exclusively in the Buddhist context that the respondents talk about positive emotions with religion. One respondent names no particular religious tradition, another one cherishes peak experiences similar to those of the respondent's previous engagement with Christianity, yet now *both* place these experiences in a secular frame of reference *and* identify their present worldview as some kind of Buddhism.[542] Still others relish Christian

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[541] FP1001

[542] JK1002

music or appreciate its ethics. Whereas the previous examination about arguments *in favour of* religion included instantiations about positive experiences with religion, that investigation differs from the present one in one regard: here the total emotional disposition found in the interviews is assessed, whereas the previous investigation focused on individual instances of positive experiences, which with some respondents were found within a predominantly negative or neutral emotional context.[543]

The emotional and experiential dispositions can be summarised with the following table:

Emotional and experiential tone	CA (N=16)	ES (N=11)	CI (N=20)
Negative	7	2	13
Neutral/ambivalent	2	4	2
Positive	2	4	2

21. Emotions and experiences with religion by prototype

It is necessary to reiterate what these numbers tell us and what they do not. The data was not systematically collected, except regarding affiliations. Hence, it would be pointless to claim statistical validity. Yet the numbers tell a story. They inform us about patterns, where the prototypes differ from one another. It is less important to know exactly in how many instances the respondents defining a prototype did criticise or appreciate religion. The big picture is more interesting: Content Altruists and Communally Irreligious criticised more than appreciated, whereas the Experientially Spiritual appreciated more than criticised. The same pattern reappears with emotions and experiences. We can say there is a clear pattern about how the prototypes regard religion. Even though all prototypes reject some aspects of religion, there is a visible continuum where the Communally Irreligious is the most negative prototype, the Content Altruist somewhat less, and the Experientially Spiritual is often more positive than negative. Even this prototype, however, takes a distance from monotheism.

[543] JK1023 expresses antipathy towards religion, yet does also describes personal experiences of peace of mind, and says this is something that is typical for Buddhism. JK1075 uses mostly neutral language when talking about religion, but the predominant emotional tone of the interview is optimistic and positive, and there is appreciation towards the diversity of worldviews, where religions have their place.

8.8 Additional Topics

So far I have been examining how the general information that I introduced initially to describe the respondents as a group would be instantiated by prototypes. There are some additional topics which seem to deserve special attention based on the prototype descriptions. The emotional dispositions and experiences with religion, personal worldview narratives concerning religion, spirituality and differentiation from them have been examined in the interviews, and compared with the prototypes. Attitudes towards religion and reasons for either rejecting, tolerating or appreciating religion have likewise received due attention. The remaining features that I would like to investigate more closely, alluded to in the prototype descriptions, are societal and social concerns, spirituality, and the non-human world. The first three are directly connected to the prototype descriptions: societal concerns were seen as a defining feature particularly for the Content Altruists. The social concern of being connected to those who share the same worldview was most important for the Communally Irreligious, whereas spirituality is the notable characteristic of the Experientially Spiritual. The respondents' relationship to the non-human world - nature, environmental concerns, respect of non-human life - has so far not been addressed directly, even though it has been part of the examination on spirituality, experiences and religious rules. I will conclude the analytical part of this thesis by presenting the results of analysing the interviews along these topics by prototype.

8.8.1 Societal and Social Concerns by Prototype

Affiliation with the organisations indicates that the respondents have some societal or social interest. Why would they otherwise choose to affiliate, when the majority of the non-religious individuals do not? The examination of the prototypes has revealed different kinds of orientations, though: For some, the affiliation is a matter of group support. For others, the possibility of influencing the Finnish society seems more important. Then again, some respondents reported that their reasons for affiliating have changed - initially, it was about finding likeminded people, but later, actively influencing society became more important.[544] And some respondents did not address these issues at all in the interviews.

I have conducted the analysis based on the present orientation. If the respondents have mentioned concerns that were formerly important yet no longer prominent, I have only categorised the statements that deal with the present situation. I have left out environmental concerns, as these will be investigated separately later. A clear division could be seen between concerns directly related to non-religion, and concerns that are related indirectly or not at all to non-religion.

Non-religious concerns: The directly non-religious concerns are about separation of the state and church, equality of stances, and freedom of conscience in official contexts. Another notable non-

[544] JK1066 is one example of such a change

religious concern is the importance of associating with those who share one's non-religious world-view.

General concerns: The indirectly or not at all non-religious themes consist of concerns for Peace, Problematic societal structures,[545] and Common good. The latter designation refers to concerns where neither the recipients of help nor the method of extending help were specified. I call all these concerns General concerns. The respondents may or may not have discussed these topics in relation to religion. One respondent, for instance, stated that religions tend to cause economic stagnation, but stated also that there are nastier and more dangerous things than religion.[546] In cases like these I have concluded that the primary target is not religion per se, but something else.

Activism: The third category consists of statements where the respondents verbalised their own active involvement of improving the society or the world. I have included here active involvement in organisations, such as the Freethinkers, participation in politics, and also more locally focused endeavours where the activism is limited to a very specific target, such as helping the local unemployed, or involvement in arranging and assisting with the coming of age-camps by Protu. I have also categorised those respondents who at the time of the interview were named as contact persons or held a position of responsibility in some of the non-religious organisations. I call this category Activism.

The immediate observation based on the analyses is that Content Altruist prototype deserves its name: people who define this prototype both *have* more concerns, and *talk* more about their concerns. Conversely, less than half of the Experientially Spiritual have expressed concerns. The Communally Irreligious fall in between these two prototypes, with majority of the respondents expressing concerns. The following table presents the results along these categories by prototype. I have not endeavoured to classify the respondents based on a predominant concern, since the interviews give hints for such solutions only in some cases. The same respondent may have been present in all three categories, if all those categories were addressed in the interview.

[545] Often about economic inequality, left-leaning political preferences, consumer culture, but also multiculturalism and general societal structures

[546] JK1043

rows 2-4 list instances from interviews, not individual respondents; rows 5-8 give information about individual respondents	**Content Altruist**	**Experientially Spiritual**	**Communally Irreligious**
Non-religious Concerns	9	-	13
General Concerns	10	5	3
Activism	7	2	4
Total number of individuals expressing societal concerns	16 (N=16)	6 (N=11)	15 (N=20)
Individuals with multiple categories	10	1	3
Individuals with a single category	6	5	12
Individuals with no categories/expressed concerns	-	5	5

22. Concerns by prototype

The Content Altruists seem to be almost equally concerned for General and Non-religious issues. They are also more active, and express multiple concerns more than others. It is not surprising that the Communally Irreligious have relatively more Non-religious than General concerns, considering that the prototype is characterised by a strong rejection of religion. A deeper examination of these concerns reveals another, qualitative difference: Six out of the 13 Communally Irreligious who have Non-religious concerns talk about the need for likeminded association. The corresponding number is two respondents for the Content Altruists, and none for the Experientially Spiritual. Therefore, not only have the Communally Irreligious relatively more Non-religious concerns than in the other

prototypes; their Non-religious concerns are also relatively more Communally oriented. This is in line with the factor interpretation presented in the previous chapter.

The Experientially Spiritual respondents did not express any non-religious concerns in the interviews. Perhaps the emotionally stable disposition and universalistic orientation of the Content Altruists makes it more unlikely for people associated with this prototype to be concerned for being part of a group of likeminded individuals. Similarly, due to the individualistic orientation of the Experientially Spiritual respondents, the dependence of groups in general is likely to be less significant. It seems, therefore, that the primary reason for affiliation for the Content Altruists and the Experientially Spiritual is not to be part of a group, or to find likeminded association.

8.8.2 Spirituality

In the prototype examination I used spirituality primarily as an analytic category to cover issues that would fit in - spiritual practices, religious or spiritual concerns, experiences of divine and experiences of illumination or enlightenment. Now I will investigate how the respondents talk about spirituality in their own words, and I refrain from including instances where they discuss things like illumination or divine, if they do not specifically use the word spiritual for it. In other words, the purpose of this examination is to see how the *word* spiritual is used in the interviews.

In Finnish, *spiritual* can be translated both as *henkinen* and as *hengellinen*. The two Finnish words have different connotations. The first one can refer to both spiritual, mental and cultural domains of human life, whereas the latter has a more religious connotation. In other words, the latter one does not lend itself to be interpreted as mental and cultural, whereas the first one does. This distinction is important, and many respondents pointed out specifically, that when they talk about spirituality in the first sense (henkinen), they do not mean it in the second sense (hengellinen). The Finnish FQS translation uses exclusively the word *henkinen,* which is appropriate. The purpose in FQS is to have different words to describe different kinds of spiritual, religious and secular orientations, and for this reason in many items the wording *spiritual or religious* is used. I give this background so that the non-Finnish-speaking readers will better understand the following analysis, where the different respondents interpret the word spiritual in various ways. In Swedish translation the appropriate translation is *andlig*, and there is no other close-matching Swedish word that could be considered as an alternative, with different nuances.

Even though all respondents engaged with the word *spiritual* while sorting the FQS items, not everyone talked about it. Then again, some respondents had more than one thing to say: In the same interview, a variety of connotations were sometimes given. For Veli, spirituality refers to both philosophy and cultural experiences or experiences in nature,[547] whereas Pasi uses the word when he

[547] JK1025

talks about intellectual life, personal growth, independence of thought but also in reference to religion: according to him, a person who accepts a set of religious dogmas is *intellectually* lazy.[548]

I am not endeavouring to uncover a primary understanding that a given respondent might have. The various understandings that may appear in the same interview are considered as separate instantiations - examples of how the word is used by those who define the prototype. This examination was particularly useful for better understanding the Content Altruists. One of the distinguishing statements for this prototype was #56 (Embraces a spiritual outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values). For the Content Altruists, this item ranks as 6th highest in terms of z-scores. This is perfectly in line with the altruistic and activistic disposition of this prototype. Since this item uses the word *spiritual*, it would be natural to conclude that for the Content Altruists, societal action is an important connotation for spirituality. The interview analyses complicates such an interpretation: Even though the Content Altruists do use the word *spiritual* in reference to concerns (societal or environmental) more than the other prototypes, the differences are not radical: four instantiations for the Content Altruists, three for the Experientially Spiritual and two for the Communally Irreligious. This information needs to be combined with the other interpretations that the Content Altruists expressed in the interviews. Spirituality was also understood as referring to something similar to religion in six instances. It was understood as referring to ordinary mental phenomena, including concerns (awareness, understanding, deep thinking, personal growth, experiences with culture or in natural environment and concerns) in thirteen instances. In all these instantiations, only once was spirituality used in a context, where the purpose was to point out a problem with religion.

> Some seek solutions from religion, even though they are dealing with their own mental [Finnish: henkinen] problems - and they find, too [solutions].[549]

Here *henkinen* is used to refer to mental life, and religion appears to the respondent to be a way of avoiding facing the real problems. We saw earlier that the theme of describing the religious person in derogatory terms was one of the reasons for rejecting religion. For the Content Altruists, it seems, the primary connotations for spirituality are ordinary mental life, combined with spirituality being similar to religiosity. In the context of FQS, some statements using the word spiritual, such as #56. (Embraces a spiritual outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values) were ranked high by the Content Altruists. It is therefore not wrong to say that this prototype is able to accommodate societal action amongst the acceptable connotations for spiritual. At the same time, it

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[548] JK1046; I have refrained from using a word-for-word English translation in this example. This is because I want to highlight the usage of the Finnish equivalent of the word spiritual, but it depends on the context where the Finnish word is used and how it is understood, whether the back-translation would return the word spiritual. In the case of Pasi, for instance, he uses henkinen a couple of times in a way where he clearly means something that is similar to religion. Whereas in the instance I am discussing here, he is talking about intellectual laziness, yet using both the Finnish word henkinen, and the word intellectual. The appropriate English translation for the word would be mental or intellectual, as I have done. Yet the Finnish word *henkinen* can be translated also as spiritual, but that would not be the appropriate meaning in this context.

[549] JK1017

is good to be aware that in ordinary parlance, the primary connotations were ordinary mental life, and something synonymous to religion.

The usage where the Finnish or Swedish equivalent word for spirituality pops up in a context where religion is being rejected, criticised or derogated is, unsurprisingly, a prominent feature in the Communally Irreligious respondents' discourse. In most respects, they are similar to the Content Altruists: spiritual refers to religion in seven, to mental phenomena in twelve, and to an independent domain in three instances. The notable feature is the rejection of religion and spirituality, which is done in nine contexts where the word is being used.[550]

What about the Experientially Spiritual? In sixteen instances the word is used to refer to ordinary mental life. I found only four instances where the word was used to refer to experiences. One might have expected a little more experiential connotations, but the respondents use words other than *spiritual* (such as transcendental or enlightenment) to describe experiences that could analytically be categorised as spiritual, such as meditational states or experiences of oneness. The notable peculiarity for this prototype is seen in how the respondents contrast spirituality and religion. The other prototypes do not make much distinction; spirituality either refers to ordinary mental phenomena, or to religion. This is not so for the Experientially Spiritual: There are no instances where the respondents for this prototype would understand spiritual to be closely equivalent to religion, whereas there were 6 and 7 such instances respectively in the other prototypes. One Experientially Spiritual respondent did talk about spirituality and religion side by side, as something that one can learn from, yet not something to identify with. Yet the respondent is not indicating that religion and spirituality would be two names for the same domain.[551] In eight instances the Experientially Spiritual respondents used the word to refer to a particular domain of human experience, which is different from both religious and ordinary mental life. Furthermore, unlike the Communally Irreligious, who rejected such spirituality, the Experientially Spiritual have interest in spirituality, thus defined, to the extent of sometimes embracing it.

Jouni says he engages regularly in exercises meant to bring him in a state of inner calmness and connection. To describe the experience, he says:

> I am with myself, object and subject at the same time.

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[550] There was one case where the rejection can be argued. It was when the word was used in reference to yoga-practice (JK1074). I have categorised references to spiritual as exercise under the heading "independent domain", because that is how the word is used in FQS and also how it is normally understood - practices meant to bring about a spiritual state of consciousness. Yet this respondents makes it clear that it is about physical, not spiritual exercise. I have therefore concluded that despite engaging in and apparently liking the yoga-exercise, the respondent nevertheless rejects the spiritual connotations of the exercise. In other words, exercise is appreciated, spirituality as an independent domain is not.

[551] JK1038

Furthermore, he says he used to have similar experiences when he was a Christian. After rejecting Christian teachings he now considers himself a kind of Buddhist, with a strong emphasis on personal agency.[552] Lahja describes her own worldview as open, because she does not want to fit into anything fixed. She practices yoga and meditation; she sometimes prays, but considers it more like pepping up herself. She has read New Age literature with interest. Spirituality is for her something non-specific, a source for broadening her worldview, and finding inspiration, but not an identification nor a pattern to fit in.[553] Simo is alienated from Christianity, and has found solace in Buddhist texts. He can relate to spirituality as exemplified by Buddhism, which for him is different from religiosity, exemplified by Christianity. Some of the crucial reasons for him to reject religion (and feel closer to Buddhist spirituality) are the concepts of personal divinity, dogmatism without questioning, and formal ritualism. Nowadays he practices meditation regularly. Sari talks in length about her spirituality, which centres around the concept of self:

> Spirituality means recognising oneself in this world. Human being is in a way a spiritual being, not an angel or something, but because the brain is so developed that he can also construct some such abstract worldview and make conclusions and things...spirituality is more a matter of identity than religion.

She goes on to elaborate on the need for personal responsibility which goes hand in hand with personal freedom. Spiritual practices, for her, mean talking with the universe, which she calls "energy-discussion, which strengthens positive images how one wants things to be resolved", but it also involves walking in the forest, contemplation and giving oneself reiki-treatment:"...this kind of flow of energy."[554]

The common themes for all these individuals is questioning spirit combined with aversion to accepting fixed beliefs. There is also emphasis of the self as the locus of agency and responsibility, and regular engagement with practices to bring about changes in consciousness.

I will conclude by presenting a table that shows how the word spiritual and its derivatives were used in the interviews. For the sake of simplicity, I have used only three categories. *Similar to religion* includes instances where the respondents used the word 'spiritual' as a synonym for religion. *Independent domain* is reserved for instances where the word was used to point to an independent realm of human experience different from both religion and mundane experience. The instances where spiritual was used to refer to spiritual exercises also belongs to this department. *Material realm* refers to usages of spirituality that point to ordinary human experience: mental phenomena (other than meditational states), experiences (other than enlightenment or religious ones) and concerns.

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[552] JK1002

[553] JK1038

[554] JK1075

The final row 'rejection' presents the number of instances, where 'spiritual' was used in the context of rejection or criticism.

this table lists instances from interviews, and does not classify individual respondents into categories	CA	ES	CI
similar to religion	6	-	7
independent domain (including exercise)	-	8	3
ordinary mental phenomena (mental, experience, concern)	13	16	12
rejected	1	1	9

23. Usage of the word 'spiritual' by prototype

To summarise the main features of the table: All prototypes use the word to refer to mental phenomena and to a lesser extent, to experiences. This is normal in Finnish language, and a similar way of using the word has been found amongst American non-religious respondents.[555] Furthermore, the Content Altruists and the Communally Irreligious do not make much distinction between religion and spirituality, whereas the Experientially Spiritual respondents do, and show interest towards spirituality. This includes the instances where the Experientially Spiritual understand spirituality in the context of exercise. The Communally Irreligious is unique in its discussing spirituality mostly in a critical fashion. This is no doubt due to the fact that for this prototype, spiritual often means something similar to religion, and, hence, is rejected. Even in the cases where the Communally Irreligious did recognise spirituality as a distinct domain, the critical disposition was present.

8.8.3 Non-human World by Prototype

Some FQS items address the topic of non-human world. Distinctions between the prototypes were found with item #11 (Feels most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of the natural world),

[555] Pasquale 2010: 66

which was ranked highest by the Experientially Spiritual (+3) and lowest by the Communally Irreligious (+1). Another item with similar distinctions is #3 (Feels closer to the ultimate in certain places). Even here, the Experientially Spiritual rank the item higher and the Communally Irreligious rank it lower than the other prototypes. Both of these items emphasise positive experience connected to spirituality, which with #11 is explicitly pronounced, and with #3 implied. It is therefore according to expectations that the Experientially Spiritual score these items higher and the Communally Irreligious lower than others.[556]

Item #40 (Expresses his or her faith by following certain dietary practices), however, is ranked highest by the Content Altruists and lowest by the Experientially Spiritual. This is in line with the Content Altruists' emphasis on acting out their ideals. It is also in line with the disinterest to follow rules by the Experientially Spiritual. This examination motivates the division of the interview analysis to two domains: Experiential and Concern. These two domains consist of different sub-topics. The broad generalisation is that the Experiential domain is about meaningful experiences either in nature, or by contemplating the greatness of the natural world. The Concern domain consists of environmental concerns, such as being concerned for the future of the planet, or for animal rights. All reports about personal engagement in action to protect nature and non-human life belong here: sorting one's garbage, following a vegetarian diet, supporting or participating in an organisation with an agenda to protect nature.

The most environmentally concerned prototype is the Content Altruists, with nine instances of expressed Concerns, and four Experiential instantiations. The Experientially Spiritual respondents expressed four Experiential and five Concern instantiations, whereas the Communally Irreligious were clearly more oriented towards experiences than concerns: Five Experiential instantiations, and two Concern instantiations.

[556] Yet another item where the sorting pattern repeats itself is #86 (Seeks to follow a spiritual path that, above all, is in harmony with the Earth). The pattern is the same, but it is not distinct, and can only be discerned by examining the z-scores. ES rank the item in +2, CA and CI in +1, where CI is lower than CA by z-scores, but even then, minimally so.

this table lists instances from interviews, and does not classify individual respondents into categories	CA	ES	CI
Experiences with non-human world	4	4	5
Concerns for non-human world	9	5	2

24. Non-human world by prototype

From looking at the table alone, it would seem that the Communally Irreligious respondents have few concerns. We have seen before, however, that the Communally Irreligious respondents do have concerns, but these tend to be more narrowly focused on the specific domain of non-religion, and only occasionally on general concerns about human society. With this investigation we can add that the general concerns of the Communally Irreligious do not seem to deal with the non-human world either.

The second important observation is about the specific nature of the concerns of the Content Altruists. Based on the examination of the societal concerns, it was not possible to make a definite statement about the predominant mode of their concerns: Nine defining respondents expressed non-religious concerns, whereas ten expressed general concerns. Now the additional examination on the non-human nature adds to our understanding of the kinds of concerns that are typical for this prototype. The fact that the respondents who define this prototype mainly discuss non-human nature in a concerned way supports the interpretation that for this prototype, concerns of a more general kind are predominant. We can add to this observation the fact that Content Altruist respondents argued against religion somewhat more, based on its effects than falsity. It would seem, then, that for the Content Altruists, the reason for rejecting religion is a mixture of falsity and effects, where effects-arguments may be a little more visible due to the General concern-orientation of this prototype.

8.9 Summary of the Additional Insights into the Prototypes

The deeper examination of the interviews by prototypes was focused on those respondents who define the prototypes. Since the FQS items by necessity aim at formulating various aspects of worldview in a general manner, the interviews can help us understand how these general orientations are expressed by real individuals. To give an example, we have seen that the Communally Irreligious are consistent in their rejection of religion and spirituality. The examination of the interviews can help us understand how such a disposition is manifested regarding issues such as affiliation, identities, or sources of inspiration. The interviews inform us that most persons associated with this prototype are affiliated with the Freethinkers, identify themselves as either atheists or non-religious, and prefer non-religious and reversed religious inspiration. Such information cannot be derived from the FQS configurations alone. It is also quite possible that in a different national context, a similar prototype with communal and religion-rejecting tendencies might be expressed differently: perhaps relatively more (or less) self-identified atheists, no freethinkers (in places like Sweden, where Freethinkers is not the predominant form of organised non-religion), and we can only guess what sources of inspiration we might find by studying the affiliates in Nietzsche Geschellschaft. Hence, the FQS prototypes tell us the general structure, and interviews inform us what it may practically mean in present day Finland to be affiliated with a non-religious organisation.

Furthermore, an examination of the interviews may enable a refinement of the factor interpretations, particularly in cases where the inter-prototype distinctions are matters of degrees rather than kind. For instance, the Content Altruists place the item #9 (Grew up in a religious household) at +1, when the other prototypes place it at 0. This is not a notable difference, yet something to be considered as a possible hint for a deeper understanding. The examination of the worldview narratives does not reveal any marked difference in familial background between the prototypes: deconversion narratives are only a few, even though religiosity, at least of the nominal kind, seems to have been part of most respondents' upbringing. The interview examination can in this case help us understand that the Content Altruists seem to be slightly more open to recognising religious elements in their childhood environment, rather than factually having a more religious background. This is an example, where interviews could have potentially provided additional information about differences of religiosity in the respondents' childhood, even though the actual examination did not provide support for such an interpretation.

In the following, I will review the previous investigations, focusing on the points I consider most salient for understanding the prototypes better.

Since the interviews were not conducted by targeting answers to specific questions external to the FQS, the frequencies of instantiations by prototype regarding the following topics are to be approached with caution. Consistencies across the topics are more important than particular ratios in

specific topics. That said, if a particular topic received a lot of attention during the interviews, that may very well be a sign of its salience for the respondents.

The one topic that was investigated systematically was the respondents' affiliation. Freethinkers was the dominant affiliation in all prototypes, whereas Skepsis was the most important secondary affiliation for the Communally Irreligious, something which is in line with this prototype's rejection of religion based on its falsity. It is not possible to say much about the other affiliations, but investigation of the multiple versus single affiliation revealed a pattern: Experientially Spiritual was considerably lower on multiple affiliations than the other prototypes: there was only one person holding multiple affiliations in this prototype, whereas there were nine holding a single affiliation, and one holding none. This may be related to the relative openness and approval regarding religion that differentiates this prototype from the others. Experientially Spiritual respondents seem less hostile and perhaps, therefore, less likely to join multiple organisations that advance the non-religious cause in Finnish society. Conversely, the more pronounced rejection of religion would explain why there are more multiple affiliations in the other prototypes.

The stable worldview narrative dominates both for the Content Altruists and the Communally Irreligious. I have not classified the dominant narrative type of the Experientially Spiritual as stable, as the dominant theme that distinguishes this prototype is moving towards spirituality. Yet even for the Experientially Spiritual, there are just a few instances of deconversion, that is, moving away from previously held religious conviction in adolescence or adulthood towards non-religion.[557] When Phil Zuckerman compares his American and Scandinavian non-religious respondents, he concludes that the Scandinavian moving away from religion is usually a natural process and not a big deal, whereas for the Americans, it is often a dramatic event involving struggle. The pattern I found across the prototypes was closer to Zuckerman's Scandinavian findings. The deconversions that had taken place did not seem dramatic. Yet in many cases, it is questionable if deconversion is the right word. Many respondents described their path to their present worldview as something that was always there - instances or recollections of childhood faith were there, yet they did not seem to play any major role as the respondents grew older. The anomaly here, of course, that differs considerably from both Zuckerman's material and the majority of the respondents in this study is that of moving towards spirituality, only found in the Experientially Spiritual prototype.

The notable feature about self-described identities is that non-religious identities dominate for the Content Altruists and the Communally Irreligious respondents. The most popular of these are atheist and non-religious; but not so for the Experientially Spiritual, where we could observe slightly more other than non-religious identities.

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557 Strictly speaking only one respondent fits the description perfectly: Christian past, presently non-religious (JK1025). The other respondents who had been Christian in their past fit better into the pattern of moving towards spirituality.

For the Content Altruists and the Communally Irreligious, directly non-religious sources of inspiration such as New Atheist voices, in Finland and abroad, and the magazines of the organisations, are important. Another notable source is reversed or academic religious interest: studying religious texts in order to be able to argue against the religious opponents, or studying religion out of academic interest. There was a notable difference here regarding the Experientially Spiritual, who mentioned no reversed or academic interest in religion, but did specify religious and spiritual texts as direct, intrinsic sources of inspiration.

Differentiation from religion was investigated in two ways: forms of religion that were accepted or approved, and reasons given for accepting or approving religion. In both regards, the ratios between the prototypes give a consistent picture, where the Communally Irreligious prototype is most critical and least approving, followed by the Content Altruist prototype, whereas the Experientially Spiritual prototype exemplifies a reversed pattern, where religions are criticised less and approved of more. Sympathies for Buddhism in the Experientially Spiritual prototype were visible. It was also somewhat surprising to see that this prototype found value in religious teachings as often as in experiences in connection to religion. A possible explanation is found in item #91 (Takes delight in paradox and mystery), which unlike the other prototypes, the Experientially Spiritual ranks at +4. If the relishing of paradoxes and mysteries is something that takes place in the context of wisdom literature of the various religious traditions, then we would have an explanation as to why religious texts are seen as valuable, while at the same time religious dogmata are rejected. Three out of the eleven defining respondents did explicitly state the appeal of such paradoxical wisdom found in certain texts. If this explanation is valid, it may also be in line with the interpretation that this prototype mostly rejects Abrahamic forms of religion that are seen as dogmatic, whereas other types most often exemplified by Buddhism are accepted or appreciated. At least those respondents who addressed the issue by speaking approvingly about non-Abrahamic religious teachings emphasised the value of questioning, and of approaching the mysteries of existence, instead of providing clearly defined rules for behaviour and social interaction. Based on the interviews, it is clear that the other prototypes do not make this kind of distinction between Abrahamic and non-Abrahamic religiosity.

Looking at the emotions and experiences with religion, it did not come as a surprise that a now familiar pattern was repeated. The Communally Irreligious have most negative experiences, followed by Content Altruists, whereas the Experientially Spiritual have mostly neutral/ambivalent or positive emotional engagements with religion. Even here, the sympathies towards non-Abrahamic religion at least party explain the pattern, even though some respondents did talk approvingly of Christianity's various features.

The Content Altruists were, as their name indicates, the most generally concerned prototype. This pattern was not self-evident when investigation was limited to the human world, but combined with the non-human world, it became clear that general concerns overrode non-religious concerns for the Content Altruists. For the Communally Irreligious, non-religious concerns dominated, and valuing

likeminded association was more visible than in the other prototypes. This confirms the prototype characterisation, where both rejection of religion and communal orientation are defining features. Overall, the Experientially Spiritual were less concerned than others, and did not hold any non-religious concerns. If the interview analysis was limited to only this section, one would begin to wonder why they affiliate at all. The explanation can be found particularly when we look at forms and reasons for rejecting religion. They are nevertheless clear about what they differentiate from and why.

We have seen that spirituality distinguishes the prototypes from one another. This was also reflected in how the respondents used the word *spiritual* in the interviews. For all prototypes, a notable usage was what is common in Finnish and Swedish: referring to ordinary mental, experiential and social phenomena. The Content Altruists and the Communally Irreligious did also use the word synonymously with religion. The Experientially Spiritual were notably *not* using spiritual as a synonym for religion. They did, however, use the word to refer to an independent domain of human experience. Doing so, they did not speak critically about spirituality, which is in accordance with the prototype characterisation. Even some Communally Irreligious respondents recognised the difference between religious and spiritual, yet they were consistent in rejecting both spirituality as an alternative and as similar to religion. This was to be expected, considering their consistency in rejecting both religion and spirituality in the context of the FQS.

Finally, the prototypes related to the non-human world in different ways. For the Content Altruists, concerns were more prominent. For the Communally Irreligious it was experiences with nature, and for the Experientially Spiritual the odds were almost even (5:4). This information can supplement our previous understanding of the Communally Irreligious. It seems that nature can be a source of sustenance for them, even though based on the interviews alone it would be difficult to describe the whole group as oriented towards nature experiences. Due to the small number of instances where the respondents addressed the topic, we can consider this: It is quite possible that experiential orientation overrides concern orientation when it comes to the non-human world. This interpretation would be in line with our previous knowledge about concerns, where non-religious concerns tend to override the general ones, including environmental ones. Since the Communally Irreligious have shown remarkable consistency in rejecting religion and spirituality, one is tempted to attribute the relatively low ranking by this prototype for item #11 (Feels most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of the natural world [e.g., a forest or the ocean], ranked at +1 by the Communally Irreligious) to the word *spiritual* rather than lacking sustaining experiences in nature.

8.10 Prototypes in Real Life

The above information allows us to take a final look at the prototype descriptions. Variation has been observed regarding emotions, social orientation, and disposition towards religion and spiritual-

ity. We will now look at each prototype, using the interview materials, to make the FQS interpretations more concrete. Furthermore, since the focus has so far been on worldview prototypes, the stories of real individuals have been in a secondary position. Examples from interviews have been used to illustrate particular points rather than the whole stories of real individuals. I will therefore conclude the prototype presentations by illustrating each prototype with an example of a real individual, the likes of which define the prototypes.

8.10.1 Content Altruist Informed by Interviews

The interviews inform us that despite the general contentment with life that is characteristic to this prototype, the defining respondents do not seem particularly content with religion. This is visible in many ways. The foremost evidence is of course affiliation, where Freethinkers is not only the most popular choice: all respondents that define this prototype were affiliated with Freethinkers. Beyond that, four out of the total 16 respondents defining this prototype held multiple non-religious affiliations. Quite a few Content Altruists, it seems, want to express their non-religiosity through affiliation. The Content Altruists were also quite at ease in using non-religious identity tags, something that makes them stand out in Finland. Atheist and non-religious were the most popular ones, followed by a host of other non-religious identities. Most importantly, no respondents associated with this prototype used other than non-religious identity tags in the interviews. The conclusion is that persons of this prototype are comfortable with expressing their non-religion. The Content Altruists derive inspiration from sources that point to a religion-rejecting tendency: Six instances of directly non-religious inspiration and four of studying religious texts to challenge believers could be discerned. Even though only half of the defining respondents discussed their sources of inspiration, this is nevertheless more than the Communally Irreligious, where only seven out of the 20 respondents who define this prototype mentioned sources of inspiration. The critical perception about religion also becomes visible when the interviews are analysed by perceptions of religion. Even though the Content Altruists are not as critical as the Communally Irreligious, they name nine instances of problematic forms of religion, contrasted with only four acceptable ones. The numbers are about instances, where the same respondent could contribute with multiple entries. If we consider how many respondents named problematic forms of religion, we find that five respondents named problems, whereas three respondents named approvals. This can be contrasted with the Experientially Spiritual prototype, where we find more approvals of religion (nine instances by eight respondents) than problematic examples (two instances by two respondents). The most frequent object of criticism is Islam, and the most popular candidate for a relatively harmless religion is found in Nordic countries. Furthermore, they give reasons for rejecting religion: religion's ill effects are mentioned 12 times, its falsity ten times, and religious people are characterised in derogatory terms twice. Even though persons of this prototype have positive things to say about religion, there are 23 instances of criticism and only five of approval.[558] Also, when it comes to experiences and emotions

[558] Qualifying statements are taken into account here. Without considering qualifiers which tame the preceding criticisms or approvals, the odds would be 24:7.

regarding religion, it becomes clear that contentment is not the right word to describe their feelings with religion: out of the eleven respondents who explicated their emotional dispositions, seven held predominantly negative feelings, two were ambivalent or neutral, and only two were positive. It is of course possible that a content person may have a predominantly neutral emotional disposition, and therefore feels no need to talk about it. Even if we would categorise all five respondents who did not talk about it as neutral, it would still be the case that there would be as many negative as neutral cases.

The other important feature of this prototype is its focus on altruism: the world is seen as a place to be improved by practical action. Persons of this worldview are clearly occupied with social, societal and environmental concerns, as all defining respondents named one or several such concerns. Even though addressing non-religious concerns is certainly part of the program for improving the world, persons of this prototype are even more concerned about general issues: environmental concerns, concerns for peace and more equal distribution of wealth are some examples given in the interviews. In line with this concerned disposition, persons of this prototype are more likely to see nature as an object of concern than a source of inspiration.

The background of persons of this worldview is mostly stable. Non-religion has existed, typically, since adolescence, despite the nominally religious environment many respondents were brought up in. It appears, however, that persons of this prototype are somewhat more likely than persons of the other prototypes to make note of religion's influence in their childhood or adolescence, if such influence was there.

I conclude by illustrating this prototype with the story of a real individual I call Lena.[559] Her story exemplifies many of the features that are salient for this prototype. Despite the characteristics that she shares with other Content Altruists, Lena has her own voice that makes her worldview distinct.

Personal Story: Lena. Lena is active in many ways. She writes a blog, where she particularly focuses on societal issues. In her writings, religion occupies a prominent position due to it being a "social phenomenon". Due to her writing skills, she has also contributed to the Finnish non-religious publications. She is also concerned about the environment, and involved in politics.
She describes her years growing up as being typically Finnish and says, in regard to her family, that "they did not go to church very often". She never could believe, and it was a major experience for her to discover that there are others who also do not believe. This made it possible for her to "be able to come out". She mentions in particular the importance of a lecture given by one of the prominent New Atheist voices that she heard when she was abroad. It prompted her to buy a CD as well as books and to listen to podcasts. "For the entire car ride, I listened and thought 'this is just what it is like.' This is what I have always thought...and we are so alike."

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559 The following is adapted from the interview, which is partly published in an article by Nynäs, Lassander and Kontala 2013

For Lena, religion is "completely illogical" and is dangerous in many cases, since "there is that bit about creating guilt and fear". When she discusses religion, other values also emerge as does the importance of ecological consciousness, which has great significance for how she thinks about religion. She takes up, for example, Gaia spirituality as a form of neopaganism and says that "there is a thought that the Earth is an ecosystem and that everything influences everything else: "In this case, I think about the whole thing from an ecological perspective and if it even is a healthy and good religion, that it can raise people's ecological consciousness. One problem with Christianity, of course, is that it teaches that we have been given the Earth in order to enjoy it and that it does not make any difference, that god will sort things out if we go to war. This is a completely mad way of thinking." Lena's reasoning about religion mainly has to do with whether religion is harmful or not, and she makes distinctions between different religions and ways of being religious. To illustrate her ecological concerns, she says that if she would found a religion, it would be Sun-worship, which is "the only reasonable object of worship. Because it produces life to us. That is what is actually the most important thing for us...even though it does not have any effect, but if you want to worship something, it would make sense to worship it." She continues by pointing out that the Lutheran church is amongst the smartest existing religions. In fact, it is the best religion, as it is harmless:"if one has to believe in something…It is like belonging to the Social Democrats; it is not harmful, although perhaps not overly beneficial either."[560]

The salient themes are clearly visible: Activism in various forms is clearly important to her. Despite being exposed to religion in her childhood, her personal worldview has always been non-religious. Rejecting religion is primarily based on its effects, not categorically. Although the interests of the non-religious are important, she also has broader societal and environmental concerns. All these concerns find their expression in practical activism, in the form of blog-writing and participating in politics. Emotionally, her tone overall is more analytic than aggressive: She does not elaborate on her personal emotional landscape, but during the interview, when she talks about religion, her talk is often accompanied with laughter. One does not get an impression of aggressive overall rejection, even though it is clear that she sees religion more often than not as a problem. It seems that the social concerns determine which religious phenomena she considers problematic, and which are harmless.

Lena's approach to non-religion is in many ways typical for Content Altruists, and in important ways different from the second prototype.

8.10.2 Experientially Spiritual Informed by Interviews

The Experientially Spiritual are oriented towards meaningful experiences, with an individualistic social orientation and openness to spirituality. These features are combined with the rejection of

[560] JK1043; Nynäs, Lassander and Kontala 2013

traditional, authoritarian and group-oriented religion. This rejection is expressed in being affiliated in non-religious organisations, but the Experientially Spiritual hold less multiple affiliations than persons of the other prototypes, which may be explained by their less critical attitudes toward religion: persons of this prototype are not as keen on criticising and rejecting religion as the other prototypes. With identities, these dynamics become more visible: persons of this prototype speak less about their assumed identities, and when they do, they use other than non-religious identities as much or more than non-religious identities. Their openness to spirituality is perhaps hinted at here. Be it as it may, the openness to spirituality definitely comes into expression in the personal worldview narratives, where the dominant theme is moving towards spirituality. It is also expressed when persons of this prototype talk about their sources of inspiration, where religious or spiritual sources of inspiration are more popular than non-religious or reversed religious inspirations. When persons of this prototype discuss forms of religion, five respondents name Buddhism and additionally three name all religions as acceptable, whereas only two respondents name problematic forms of religion. Furthermore, when they elaborate on their reasons for either rejecting or approving religion, it turns out that religion is rejected based on falsity (three times), effects (five) and by derogatory characterisation of the religious person (two). Religion is found acceptable more often: six times based on valuable teachings, six times for being a source of experiences, and four times due to its other contributions, either on the social or individual level. If qualifying statements are considered, the Experientially Spiritual find problems eight times, and speak approvingly 15 times. Odds are more in favour than against religion. The same pattern is seen with experiences and emotions, where unlike other prototypes, neutral or positive outweigh the negative. When we examine how persons of this prototype talk about spirituality, it turns out that despite using the word in reference to ordinary mental phenomena, they also make a distinction between religion and spirituality, where spirituality is approved or embraced. There are also clear sympathies towards non-Abrahamic religiosity: yoga, meditation, New Age, and Buddhism are the most likely candidates for approval. Some respondents did, however, appreciate at least some Christian teachings, if not the whole package.

Another important feature of this prototype is its individualism, which was observed when we investigated their social and societal concerns. Compared to the other prototypes, the Experientially Spiritual do not have many such concerns. For those who have, these concerns are not of the non-religious kind. Since some general concerns were mentioned, it would be going too far to claim that this prototype is without concerns.

The Experientially Spiritual both talked more about their experiences and emotions with religion, and in a more positive manner than the other prototypes, as mentioned previously. Besides talking about religion, the Experientially Spiritual talked about meaningful experiences using expressions such as transcendence, enlightenment, or being subject and object at the same time. Experiential orientation notwithstanding, it seems that persons of this prototype see the non-human world just as much as an object of concern as a source of sustaining experiences. In this regard, this prototype is less experientially oriented than the Communally Irreligious. It seems, therefore, that nature experi-

ences are not a defining feature for this prototype. Rather, it is spirituality, which often takes the form of exercises, combined with selective appreciation of even Abrahamic religion, which makes this prototype stand apart. When religion is characterised by ideas of a personal divinity, authorities, traditions, rules and dogmatic beliefs, it is rejected.

Personal Story: Simo. To exemplify this prototype, we can hear the story of Simo. A middle-aged physiotherapist, Simo grew up with Christianity. His early engagement with religion was characterised by intimidation with ideas of sin and hell. Even though he admits that his relatives probably meant no harm, he remembers being afraid due to such doctrines: "In my childhood I found religious concepts scary. I was intimidated that evil deeds are punished. The concept of sin was difficult for me as a child...well-meaning grandmothers introduced fear in the child's life. It was awful, I did not talk about it to anyone."

As soon as he could, he resigned his church membership. At that time, he became critical towards Christianity, but also started his personal spiritual quest. He found solace in Buddhist texts. "I found Buddhist texts. They probably helped me from going crazy...it was a shelter." He says he has continued his quest later on. At one point, it was important for him to find likeminded association, but that is no longer the case. "It is less interesting to associate with people who agree. That means the end of questioning. Everyone agrees, it is not always that interesting." In his personal life, meditation is an important and regular activity. Eating in particular is something he considers a sacred act.

Even though Simo has an interest in Buddhism and finds inspiration in certain Buddhist teachers, he has his own interpretation of some tenets. Reincarnation for him means that in due course, his body will give nourishment to new life. Salvation is conceived of as a relief, when "one is able to relinquish one's ego, then one can realise that nothing dies, it is the ego that dissolves."

Interestingly, even though Simo has moved from Christianity towards Buddhism and engages in personal spiritual practices, he does not consider having become religious. Rather, he has given up religion, exemplified by Christianity, and moved towards something that, for him, is spiritual rather than religious. Simo's social orientation can best be characterised by independence: he relishes the association of people with whom he disagrees. Personal spiritual practices and interpretations of Buddhist teachings give him solace, not being part of a group, nor following an authority or a tradition.

8.10.3 Communally Irreligious Informed by Interviews

The Communally Irreligious have a communal or collectivistic social orientation and they reject religion and spirituality consistently. A special source of emotional inspiration for them is found in like-minded association, whereas religion evokes negative emotions. They affiliate mostly with Freethinkers, but an important secondary affiliation is Skepsis. In this prototype, there are also many multiple affiliations, seven out of 20 defining respondents holding more than one affiliation.

The dominant worldview narrative is stable non-religiosity, even though the interviews do not show that persons of this prototype would have grown up more often in a non-religious environment than persons of the other prototypes. It seems, therefore, that the Communally Irreligious pay more attention to early non-religious influences, if such influences have been present. Persons of this prototype also readily identify as non-religious. Like with Content Altruists, most preferred identities are atheist and non-religious. Curiously, three respondents self-identified as agnostics, but a closer examination revealed that only one of these was situationally open to a higher intelligence that directs the events in our lives. The rejection of religion is likewise visible when we look at the sources of inspiration. The topic itself was not particularly popular, but those who addressed it mentioned only non-religious and reversed religious inspirations.

The importance of rejecting religion became particularly clear when the respondents talked directly about rejecting religion. There was no loss of words, and the Communally Irreligious were the most keen on naming problematic examples of religion, as well as reasons for rejecting religion. When the respondents gave reasons for their rejection of religion, falsity was the most popular argument, followed by effects and derogatory characterisations. It appeared that more than expected, persons of this prototype were able to appreciate religion, mostly due to its contributions in society or as a source of personal support. A closer examination, where qualifying statements taming the appreciations were considered, revealed that unqualified appreciation was a rare specimen: 29 critical remarks were contrasted with only three unqualified approvals. Rejection of religion was combined with rejection of spirituality. The most common understanding of spiritual was ordinary mental phenomena, followed by spiritual being synonymous with religion. In three instances, the word was used to refer to an independent domain. In these cases, spirituality was rejected, as was also done when the word was used to refer to religion. Indeed, unlike the other prototypes, often when persons of this prototype used the word ‘spiritual’ they did so in a context where they criticised religion.

The rejection of religion is also visible in how persons of this prototype discuss their emotions and experiences with religion. The pattern with 13 predominantly negative, two neutral or ambivalent and two positive interviews is in line with the previous observations: overwhelmingly, religion is a source of irritation or fear, rather than a matter of indifference, not to speak of inspiration. The comparatively collectivistic orientation of this prototype gains support from the investigation of concerns. Non-religious concerns are prominent, which is in line with the theme of rejecting religion. Only two respondents expressed general societal concerns and, additionally, two expressed environmental concerns, whereas thirteen expressed non-religious concerns: Equality of the stances, rights of the non-religious in society, but also communal concerns: nearly half of the non-religious concerns (6/13) are concerns for finding association with those who share one’s outlook.

Mostly, the interviews did not add to the understanding of the emotional life of this prototype beyond what we already knew based on the factor interpretation: negative emotions dominated with religion, and association with other non-religious individuals provided support. An important in-

sight into the emotional profile of this prototype may be found when the respondents discuss their relationship to the non-human world. Seven out of 20 respondents addressed the topic, which is too little to make claims for the whole group. At least for those who did address the issue, nature is more often a source of inspiration and sustenance than an object of concern. If this is the case, then it is also in line with the previous observation of general concerns being less important than non-religious concerns for persons of this prototype.

To exemplify this prototype, the story of Pertti is informative.

Personal Story: Pertti. Pertti grew up in a religion-rejecting family. He says that his grandfather was subscribing to the Freethinkers' magazine, and his father resigned his church-membership when it was still uncommon. That was an impetus for his own rejection and critical stance towards Christianity. Already at the age of ten, he felt that Christian doctrines were unrealistic and filled with internal contradictions. His earliest personal introduction to freethought was during the youth camp of the Finnish labour movement. Later on he has been active in arranging Protu-camps, secular alternatives for the Christian confirmation. "I see myself as a contact person, I am not an educator. I book the facilities, write invitations...the local Freethinkers' society is dependent on topical news...it is small-scale, keeping and establishing contacts with those with a similar outlook."

Rejection of religion comes repeatedly up in the interview, and even when the church does something that he in principle approves of, such as charity, Pertti is quick to add that "on the other hand it is good, but the old folkway is that if you want to help, give the man a fishing rod and teach him how to fish. It is a little frustrating that are these people not able to come up with something better?" Even though he goes on to elaborate on several problems with religion, he does admit that the church has done at least one good thing, which is teaching people how to read. Other than that, he is critical about religious institutions, rules, and nominal religiosity. Overall, his impression about religion is that it is filled with internal contradictions, and as such, easy to refute.

It seems clear that religion has little to offer Pertti on a personal level. His interest in religion is characterised by irritation, something that comes from his family background, where the political left and rejection of religion have played major roles. Even though he is engaged with social work, it is mainly focused on keeping contact with other people who are alienated from religion, and arranging social occasions for the likeminded.

These personal stories inform us about the relationships between the prototypes and individuals. On the one hand, it is individuals like the ones just introduced, whose preferences form the basis for the prototypes. On the other hand, we can see how individuals are always persons, whose worldview preferences give a personal flavour to the worldview prototype under investigation. Just as we can abstract the idea of extrinsic or intrinsic religious dispositions from real individuals who may be situated somewhere in between the theoretical opposite poles, we can do the same to develop theo-

ries about non-religious dispositions. These are called worldview prototypes, and this study has found three of them. I will discuss these more in the concluding chapter, where I also present ideas for future research.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Being part of the broader research project Viewpoints to the World, the present study shares some of the aims and objectives of the parent project. The particular question that this study has focused on has been: What are the major shared and differentiating elements in the worldviews of individuals engaged in the Finnish non-religious organisations? Since non-religion and worldview are the key theoretical concepts used in this study, I have argued for the suitability of non-religion to be used as the broad term to denote anything that is defined by a relationship of difference to religion. In this study, I have presented the ways in which the respondents of this study view religion. There was some variation, but the lowest common denominator that all respondents would agree with was that the object of differentiation would at least consist of Christianity. Since many respondents also criticised Abrahamic religions and Islam, whereas none voiced any sympathies, the next largest common ground would consist of differentiating from Abrahamic religiosity. All religions do not constitute an object of differentiation for the whole group of respondents due to a visible minority with sympathies towards Buddhism, yoga and meditation.

It turned out that the term non-religion has emic value, as is evident from the interviews: *non-religious* was the second most popular self-identification, and in contexts other than self-identification, it was used to refer to people holding a similar disposition as the respondents. Most other terms that are commonplace in similar contexts, such as atheist, rationalist, freethinker, secular humanist and others capture only particular aspects of the broader context of differentiating from religion. They are therefore less suitable for describing the respondents as a group, since we cannot assume at the outset that everyone self-identifies for instance as an atheist, or could be described as an atheist due to a disposition that could analytically be categorised as such. The term secularist has been argued to be too broad in scope: The respondents of this study are affiliated with organisations that, despite some differences, nevertheless challenge the hegemony of religious traditions in Finnish society, whereas it is possible to understand secular to refer to both differentiation *within* religion, and to phenomena that have no connection with religion. The best candidates for a parent term are irreligion and non-religion. Non-religion was chosen, since it is open to a broader spectrum of differentiation than irreligion, and hence, more suitable at least at the outset, where it was sensible to assume little about the outcomes. As it turned out, the investigation confirmed the term's suitability, due to the minor yet nevertheless notable presence of perspectives that accommodate, approve, and sometimes even embrace certain forms or expressions of religion. Such perspectives are more difficult to accommodate into irreligion, due to its out-group and antagonistic semantics.

I found it necessary to present an overview of the etymology and history of the concept and term *worldview* to motivate its usage in this study as a parent category for both religious and non-religious outlooks. Since there is no unified understanding about what worldview means, I started by locating worldview in a fourfold table consisting of two dimensions where worldview has been theorised: individual-collective dimension, and intuitive-intellectual dimension. I located worldview in

the quadrant that stands for an individual's outlook. I argued that in a context like the present one, the existential function of worldview should guide the theoretical elaboration, whereas the practical function of the worldview with its undeniable value and necessity for human survival and culture was left unelaborated. I maintained that worldview refers to dispositions that can be brought to conscious awareness. Furthermore, I argued that the verbal expressions of worldview are most suitable for investigating worldviews, not least because the non-verbal expressions nevertheless seem to depend on the verbal expressions to be understood, particularly when it comes to the existential function of worldview that has to do with meanings rather than practical solutions.

Since the emphasis has been on non-religion, it makes sense to use an instrument that takes various ways of being religious or spiritual seriously. An instrument that engages the respondent with plenty of such statements allows the respondent to deal with a host of ideas connected to religion and spirituality. Non-religion should not be studied through various grades of negation only, as would be the case with an instrument that only measures religiosity. It is necessary to have statements that are positively representative of the respondents' internal frame of reference. The instrument used in the present study, FQS, combines both of these features. It not only enables a nuanced differentiation *within*, but more importantly, *from* religion or spirituality.

9.1 Summary of Results

The results gave a hint for the idea expressed in the previous chapter: boundaries between worldviews are sometimes porous, and a respondent may incorporate into her worldview elements, which might be regarded as belonging to distinct worldview categories. Furthermore, the results point to the complexity of non-religion. To illustrate this with the well-known three "B:s" of non-religion, the respondents of this study exemplified most combinations.[561] Some respondents do not believe, practice (behave) nor belong to a religion. Some do not believe, yet occasionally practice, or belong for social reasons. Some do not practice (behave) yet both belong and believe, although not in any of the major religious traditions in Finland. There is an atheist, who grew up in an environment where freethought has been in the family for generations. For this respondent, not believing and not belonging is nevertheless accompanied by behaving: the person regularly participates in religious services due to the beauty of the church-music. Two persons belong to the church, yet they neither believe nor practice. Some respondents talk highly about Buddhist teachings as being either rational, or in other ways close to the respondent. At least two respondents who find Buddhist teachings sensible also practice meditation regularly. I can only interpret that not believing in Buddhism and not behaving - by not engaging in Buddhist practices - do not apply in these cases. I did not find

561 I apply the 3-B-model here only to illustrate the complexity. National contexts differ, and as Taira (2014: 239-252) has suggested, it might be useful to add to the list attitudes and identifications, at least in Finland.

evidence that any respondent would exemplify three B:s by affirmation, but some came quite close.[562]

I will continue by presenting the worldview prototypes. After that I will present the interview results followed by an elaboration of how these results look like by prototype.

9.1.1 Worldview Prototypes

In the chapter entitled *Commonality and Variation in Non-religious Worldviews* I have argued for the suitability of the three-factor solution in the FQS analysis. The analysis indicates that there is a strong common ground amongst the respondents. The common ground consists of three distinct features: Alienation from traditional religion, secular humanistic disposition[563] and experiential dimension outside a traditional religious context. I summarise these features in my own words, based on the factual loadings of the Q-set items as the background.[564]

9.1.2 Common Ground

Alienation from traditional religion: The persons associated with the worldview prototypes of this study are alienated from holy figures, whether human or divine. They neither approach nor believe in a personal God. Overall, religious ideas that come into conflict with scientific principles or rationality are rejected. Without anticipating a life hereafter, whether in terms of salvation for the pious or damnation for sinners, the respondents of this study consider religious content to be mythic and metaphoric. Considering hypocrisy common in religious circles, religion itself is seen as a consequence of human fears and desires.

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[562] Kari (JK1053) belongs to a religious organisation by his own choice, not for social reasons. He also speaks approvingly about certain religious teachings. Whether he also engages in religious practices cannot be determined based on the interview. The combination that can be ascertained in his case is B B N - belonging to a religious community, believing in religious teachings, but not behaving (engaging in practices). It is possible that the de facto combination would be B B B, but the question has to be left open for the time being.

Another combination that is probably not found amongst the respondents is N B B - not believing, belonging and behaving. The few respondents who reported religious affiliation did not give any indications of engaging in religious practices. Examples of the other combinations that could be ascertained are N N N (FP1002), N N B (JK1058), N B N (JK1014), B N N (JK1023), B N B (JK1002) and B B N (JK1051).

[563] It is mostly for the sake of clarity that I choose to present alienation from religion and secular humanist disposition as two distinct domains.

[564] Salience means both positive and negative - items placed at +2 to +4 and -2 to -4.

Secular-humanistic disposition: The negative common ground which is dominated by rejection of divinity and its associated doctrines is combined with shared support for secular humanistic ideals: Without discerning any higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species, persons associated with these prototypes nevertheless affirm the possibility of human progress on a worldwide scale. Morality and compassion are not only possible without religion: following moral principles, acting compassionately, and making the world a better place are important ideals. Seeking to actively change societal structures and values is important, which is in line with participating in organisations dedicated to promoting such ideals and affecting change in society. At the same time, there is respect for the stance of others, even when different from one's own, particularly if such a stance reflects thoughtfulness and responsibility.

Experiential dimension: The inner world of the respondents is enriched by music, art or poetry, but also by being in the midst of a natural world. There is an overall feeling of being at home in the universe.

These characteristics are shared by all prototypes, even though there are differences in terms of the degree to which each statement was felt as descriptive or non-descriptive. Next we will come to the prototype descriptions, which highlight these differences. At times the differences are a matter of degree within the same preference. At other times, the differences are a matter of kind, and opposite preferences can be distinguished.

9.1.3 Distinguishing Features

The three worldview prototypes are called Content Altruist (CA), Experientially Spiritual (ES) and Communally Irreligious (CI). The names were chosen based on the internal characteristics of these prototypes, when they were compared to each other. This means that whereas the names make sense in the context of this study, other names might be chosen for comparative purposes in a broader context. In other words, to place these prototypes on a global FQS map, one might prefer to add the words Secular Humanist or Non-religious after each prototype name, as they all share a basic secular humanist disposition, and they are all defined by their differentiation from religion. I will elaborate on these prototypes now, based on the differences. To do this, I will consider the prototype differences based on three worldview dimensions: emotional/experiential, social/societal, and non/religious/spiritual.

Content Altruist: Persons of this prototype have a stable emotional landscape, characterised by contentment. They feel peaceful even faced with life's difficulties. This has a likely connection to their broad base of commitments: persons of this prototype are concerned, and they also want to act out their concerns in order to make the world a better place. Their social orientation is best described as universalistic, as they want to improve the world. At times, these concerns cover more than the human society, extending to the non-human world: environmental and animal rights issues were men-

tioned in the interviews. Part of this activistic orientation is also to work for changing the Finnish society into a direction where the non-religious individuals have equal rights in the public sphere. This orientation is not simply a matter of public engagement. Emotionally, religion stands for the exception in their general contentment. The Content Altruists are neither satisfied with religion nor its position in society. Consequently, they reject religion, but they do this moderately rather than strongly. This rejection is slightly more based on effects than falsity, which is in line with the prototype's general concerns: religion is rejected particularly when its societal effects are seen as harmful. Overall, persons of this prototype are willing to help those in need, and respect the stance of others even when different from their own.

Experientially Spiritual: Persons of this prototype value meaningful positive experiences, which they derive from nature, music, art and poetry. Unlike the other prototypes, persons associated with this prototype are also interested in spirituality, which refers to a peaceful state of mind and an independent domain of human experience. Consequently, they often engage in private spiritual practices. This engagement is understandable, since persons of this prototype are interested in personal development, and their social orientation can best be described as individualistic. Hence, they are less likely to hold multiple non-religious affiliations, and they speak about their affiliation less. Likewise, they use more often other than non-religious self-identifications. Societally they are less concerned than persons in the other prototypes, reporting barely any non-religious concerns. Despite being alienated from institutionalised, rule- and group-oriented religion, they are interested in certain religious teachings, and relish religious art and music. Unlike the other prototypes, persons of this prototype make distinctions between religious traditions. Whereas Abrahamic religion is rejected, features of Eastern religiosity such as Buddhist teachings and practices, usually yoga and meditation, are accepted, and even embraced.

Communally Irreligious: The third prototype is the most consistent in rejecting religion and spirituality: even in cases when the respondents sometimes state that some effects of religion may be good, they are quick to qualify such statements to make sure that their rejection of religion stands prominent. Religious beliefs, practices and institutions are rejected, and the same goes for spirituality. This is not a surprise, considering that persons associated with this prototype have mostly negative emotions or experiences with religion, give most examples of religions as problems, and give most reasons for rejecting religion. They seem somewhat more likely to reject religion based on its falsity than its effects. This disposition is related to the social orientation and concerns of this prototype: persons of this prototype have more non-religious than general concerns. One of these concerns is finding likeminded association. This need is located in the intersection of rejecting religion and a group-oriented social disposition. Persons of this prototype are not shy to use non-religious identities, nor being affiliated in non-religious organisations. Concerns for the non-religious individuals' position in the Finnish society are more prominent than general concerns. Emotionally, persons of this prototype present a puzzle in that they seem to be less reluctant to reject items that discuss negative emotions. Whereas this is to be expected with items with religious wordings, the same

holds with religiously neutrally worded items. The inter-prototype differences are small, and these distinctions usually take place in the neutral middle area of the sorting board, indicating little personal salience. Based on the results from this study, the conclusion is that further investigation is needed. These observations can be contrasted with the fact that persons of this prototype are relatively satisfied with their life, often finding sustenance from music, art or nature - except if these are associated with religion or spirituality. An additional source of sustenance that is important for this prototype is likeminded association, which is indicated in the prototype name.

9.2 Assessing FQS

The primary aim of this study was not to assess FQS. However, since the instrument is new, the experiences of this study are relevant in two ways. First, does FQS work for assessing non-religious worldviews? If it does, this motivates its usage in future studies that aim at discovering nuanced differentiation from religion. Second, do the experiences from this study suggest ideas for developing the instrument further?

I presented a list of challenges and limitations with FQS before presenting the results of this study. Now I would like to review these remarks informed by the experiences of the present study. Since I have not made claims for generalisations to larger populations, the discussion about whether or how the results have a more general validity is of less concern. Moreover, such a discussion is something that takes place on a more theoretical level, regarding Q-methodology in general, whereas the focus of this section is to reflect on the suitability of the specific application of Q-methodology in the context of the present study. In other words, how does FQS manage the assessment of the non-religious worldviews, particularly in Finland? Let us see how the experiences of this study can inform such a discussion.

Assessing Religious Items: The large number of religiously worded items did evoke reflection during the sorting procedure, which is obviously desirable. At times, some respondents found it demanding to decide the ordering of negative preferences. As one respondent put it:

> Is it more important for me not to go to church, or that I do not give money to someone?[565]

Notwithstanding the difficulties exemplified above, nearly all respondents completed the task. I would not take the above mentioned comment as a criticism, as the respondent is simply stating that the answer to the question is not obvious. Reflection is required. Some respondents did visibly enjoy the challenge and praised the instrument. One respondent suggested that the instrument be developed into a social game, because it was fun to engage with it. Based on the experiences from this study, I am tempted to think that the general set-up where the majority of the items positively ad-

[565] FP1003

dress religion rather than non-religion works well in a Q-methodological study which targets non-religion. I believe this is particularly due to the fact that the Q-set does include a number of positively non-religious statements - a feature that was appreciated by many respondents.

Assessing Forced Distribution: For most respondents, the original pile of items the respondents disagreed with turned out larger than the neutral pile or pile for agreement. The respondents, therefore, had to place items that they disagreed with in the middle section of the board, sometimes even on the right hand side of the middle section. It is, therefore, possible that items the respondents disagreed with ended up in columns marked with positive numbers. The following table shows the statistics of the pre-sorting three-pile arrangements by prototype:

means per pile	Content Altruist	Experientially Spiritual	Communally Irreligious
agree	22.75	29.11	20.47
neutral or ambivalent	20.125	24.89	19.58
disagree	58.125	47	60.95

25. Initial sorting patterns by prototype

The table shows that both the Content Altruists and the Communally Irreligious have relatively less items that they agreed with - roughly 23 and 20 respectively. The real concern in prototype interpretations is whether items that a prototype would disagree with would look like mild agreement due to the distribution format. It turns out that for both of these prototypes, the disagree-area does occupy the middle column that has place for 19 items. However, only for the Communally Irreligious would one disagree-item have to be placed in the column marked with +1. This dynamic is less visible with the Experientially Spiritual prototype, even though the disagreement pile is still considerably larger than the agreement pile. The prototype interpretations need to be sensitive to this, and I have kept this in mind in the prototype descriptions.

There is a possibility, however, that the forced distribution caused cognitive dissonance or irritation in some cases. When asked for feedback about the instrument, one recurring theme was what was shown about the initial sorting patterns: the respondents would have preferred to have more place for items they disagreed with. In two cases, the respondents did not complete the sorting. In both

cases, based on the feedback I am tempted to think that the forced distribution was not an issue.[566] Besides the respondents who did not complete the sorting, there were others who did complete, yet mentioned the forced distribution as a problem in their feedback. This has to be contrasted with many other respondents, who seemed to like the challenge introduced by the forced distribution, and with yet others who did not comment on this feature at all.

An easy way to correct it would be to allow skewed distributions. At the same time, the forced distribution does encourage deep introspection and reflection, an aspect which may be lost if skewed distributions were allowed. Based on experiences so far I would not make changes, but if further studies regularly yield critical feedback about the distribution form, or considerable imbalance in the initial sorting in three piles, allowing skewed distributions might be considered. Technically this would not be a problem, as the freely available software PQMethod can be used even with skewed sorts.

There is another issue related to the distribution form, where the experiences of the present study may hint at alternative considerations. The current distribution consists of ten columns and 101 items. It is not uncommon in Q-studies to have both less items and more columns. The Q-analysis revealed that the inter-prototype differences in item scores were often not large. Despite this, the consistencies in the patterns and the interview analysis helped to determine real differences between the prototypes. Particularly if interview analysis is not an available option, increasing the number of columns in the board might help to discern differences. This might be relevant in studies, where the focus is on a group of respondents that can be expected to hold largely similar worldviews. Finnish non-religious group-affiliates seems to be an example of this.

Assessing Barrelled Items: One of the two respondents who did not complete the sorting stated explicitly that the 1.5-barrelled feature, where the FQS statement assumes something at the outset without voicing it out, led to the decision of not completing the sort. For instance, #12 (Engages in religious rituals chiefly on major holidays) seems to assume that the respondent does participate in religious rituals sometimes, and for a non-religious respondent who never participates in religious rituals, placing the statement in the disagreement end of the board may be felt as the wrong response. After all, a very active religious person might place the statement in the same column. Some other respondents voiced a complaint about this, yet completed the sort. In these cases, the saving grace for FQS is that the middle ground is reserved for ambiguous items, and can be utilised every time a barrelled item is experienced as ambiguous. It may not be easy to find a way to both improve the wording for *non-religious respondents* and at the same time keep the item salient for *religious respondents*. Moreover, since the interpretation of the whole configuration can shed light on how an individual statement is to be understood, interpretation of barrelled items can in fact be revealing.

[566] One respondent seemed overall less motivated about the study, whereas another one did specify the reason for not completing the sorting. The reason, however, was related to another feature of the instrument, namely that of barrelled items.

The best example in the present study about how an extensive investigation can reveal what lies behind the sorting of barrelled items is related to items that use the wording "religious or spiritual." The barrelling in these items seemed to reveal an interesting inter-prototype distinction.

I would suggest that even from the point of view of studying non-religious worldviews, it is worthwhile that the instrument stay relevant for both religious, spiritual and neither/nor or both/and respondents. This allows for comparisons between significantly different worldviews. Nevertheless, from the particular point of view of studying non-religion, some 1.5-barrelled items might be considered for paraphrasing differently, without losing the overall impact of the instrument.

Assessing Culturally Conditioned Items: I received feedback from some respondents that the instrument was American in flavour. Whereas that may be the case, and I have pointed out one example of an item where this seems a correct observation (#82, "Is reluctant to reveal to associates a personal loss of faith"), it may be more difficult to point out how the items might be better worded to accommodate Nordic countries, without losing the instrument's relevance in United States and elsewhere. I asked almost all respondents to propose how the instrument might be improved, yet received no consistently recurring suggestions. It did not seem that some particularly Finnish non-religious issue would be missing. In an increasingly globalised culture, it is more of a value than an obstacle, if the research instrument allows inter-cultural comparisons. This feature may be lost if the instrument is overly modified to accommodate Finnish or Nordic non-religiosity. It seems to me that if such considerations be taken seriously, it is a matter of many years of applying the instrument in many different contexts and learning from these experiences.

Proposals for Reformulations: Since many items use wordings such as religious outlook, faith and other religious-sounding expressions, which were nevertheless meant to be applied in a broader context, additional sorting instructions were provided to clarify that such expressions should be understood in more general terms, "potentially encompassing atheist, agnostic, indifferent, or even antagonistic views."[567] There are a number of such items, and I would propose that such items be reformulated in future editions using other more neutral words, such as stance, outlook or worldview. In my opinion, little of relevance for religious respondents is lost if such changes are implemented, whereas it will be considerably easier for the non-religious respondents to engage with such items. Also, I would propose that items that discuss participation in religious organisations be broadened to more general terms, to be able to accommodate other than religious organisations. At least five respondents interpreted Freethinkers to be a religious organisation and were, therefore, able to agree with item #1: "Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organisation or cause." This shows how sometimes the same statement can be sorted at opposite ends of the board, depending on how the individual chooses to interpret the item. By changing the wording, the instrument might allow us to better see to which extent the group-orientation found in the

[567] Wulff 2009b

Communally Irreligious prototype is similar to or different from religious group-orientation. I do not think such changes would compromise the relevance of such items for religious respondents.

I am making these proposals based on respondent feedback. There are other items where respondent feedback is not available, yet the combined examination of the FQS and interviews by prototype gives hints about how other formulations might make an item more relevant for some respondents. Consider item #11: "Feels most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of the natural world (e.g., a forest or the ocean)." It seems that inclusion of the word *spiritual* made the item more relevant for the Experientially Spiritual respondents, and less relevant for the Communally Irreligious respondents. Interviews hinted at the natural world being a source of meaningful experiences for some Communally Irreligious respondents, whereas their consistent rejection of both religion and spirituality is likely to have influenced the sorting of this item with less agreement than otherwise would have been the case. But how much is this a problem? Since the interviews were available, this information actually provided further confirmation for the centrality of rejecting spirituality for the Communally Irreligious prototype. I would perhaps consider this item as potentially problematic from the point of view of general worldview theory, where relationship to the non-human world is a recurring concern. For studying non-religion, it may be the other way round: adding the word *spiritual* may in important ways make this item relevant for understanding non-religion. The emerging prototypes were distinguished by how they viewed spirituality, and this item was one amongst many to contribute to the emerging understanding.

Final Conclusions about FQS: My conclusion based on experiences of this study is that FQS stands for a major advancement in studying non-religion. It was able to assess a common ground. Furthermore, it revealed distinctions between the prototypes across three dimensions, suggesting that non-religion is a multidimensional specimen. The forced distribution form did probably not have an effect on the emerging prototypes. I have used consideration in the prototype descriptions to avoid characterisations that run against preferences internal to the prototypes. Considering the advantages and drawbacks of the voiced complaints and appreciations, at this point I would not change this feature of FQS. A potential consideration for future editions would be with some 1.5-barrelled items, where removal of barrelling might lessen the irritation felt by some respondents with strong anti-religious sentiments. My main suggestion, where I feel little is lost whereas gains might be considerable in aiding a smoother engagement with the instrument, is changing items that discuss worldview by using words that have a religious primary connotation: faith, religious outlook and the like. If such terms were reformulated in a more neutral language, using expressions such as worldview, stance, or outlook in life, they would continue to be applicable for religious respondents and easier for non-religious respondents to relate to. Also, since the prototypes showed variation regarding group-orientation, items that discuss religious group-orientation could be rephrased to make them more positively relevant for non-religious group-orientation. This study has shown that social and societal orientation is a real and important dimension in assessing variety in non-religious worldviews. Neutrally worded items might reveal more nuances in this regard.

9.4 Reflection on the Results and Ideas for Future Studies

I started by adapting Lois Lee's proposal and defined non-religion as "anything that is defined by a relationship of difference to religion."[568] This kind of theoretical approach allowed non-religion to be defined by the respondents, according to what religion means to them, and how they differentiate from it. It seems clear that, despite variety, the lowest common denominator for the respondents' understanding of religion is Christianity. Sometimes this understanding is made explicit, at other times it is more implicit. Although many respondents singled out Nordic or Finnish religiosity as examples of less problematic forms of religion, the organisations represented in this study do react against the perceived privileges enjoyed by the two national churches of Finland. Consequently, the act of affiliation is likely to equal taking a stance against the national dominant forms of religion.

Whereas the shared basis for differentiation is defined by Christianity, some respondents did make distinctions between different religious traditions. Based on the interviews, we could say that even for those respondents who differentiate from all religions, it is still primarily Christianity that stands as the prominent object of differentiation. Others hold openness towards Eastern religiosity. This is most often Buddhism, when it comes to singling out an acceptable religious tradition, and it is most often yoga and meditation, when it comes to singling out a practice that has its roots in non-Abrahamic religion.

The relationship between religion and spirituality is seen differently by the respondents. Those who differentiate from all religions usually also differentiate from spirituality, if understood as an independent domain of human experience. Those who are open to accommodating spirituality as an independent domain, and not simply another word for ordinary mental or cultural phenomena, are often the same people who are more favourable towards Eastern religiosity. Even though at the level of individual respondents this is not a one-to-one correspondence, it is something that can be observed at the prototype level. The Experientially Spiritual respondents are more likely to differentiate spirituality from religion, they are more likely to be positive about spirituality, and they are more likely to be interested in Eastern religiosity.

The results motivate a further consideration about dichotomies. As Marion Bowman has stated, instead of being either secular or religious, it is often both and - whatever works for the individual.[569] Understanding religion in a broad sense - incorporating elements of spirituality - and considering different aspects of being non/religious, such as participation, membership, beliefs, attitudes and identifications, the results of this study give rise to the following observations: Some respondents do indeed differentiate themselves from religion in the anti-religious and anti-spiritual sense, and hence, the dichotomy of contrasting religion with non-religion works - for them. Other respondents, however, - particularly those associated with the Experientially Spiritual prototype - seem to incor-

[568] Lee 2012b: 131

[569] Bowman 2015

porate elements of spirituality in their life without compromising their non-religious self-understanding. In previous research attempts have been made to classify non-religious identities on a simple one-dimensional continuum, where the options for the individual person's identity are atheist, hard agnostic, soft agnostic, deist or theist,[570] or from atheist through agnostic to unchurched believer.[571] This study indicates that the situation is more complex than that.[572]

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the emerging prototypes is the curious way in which the different worldview dimensions are combined in a prototype. Why would a communal orientation and strong rejection of religion be combined to form a prototype? In a study on atheist group affiliates in Canada, Tomlins (2015) found that a majority of the respondents affiliated due to seeking like-minded association. At the same time, it seems that these group-affiliates were not the most vocal opponents of religion. Perhaps Canada's multiculturalism and relatively less discriminatory ethos towards the non-religious individuals explain, how the primary need for affiliation does not have to involve fighting against oppression. Instead, regular social needs dominate.[573] In Finland, most of the organisations that were examined profile themselves against precisely this kind of discrimination in the public sphere, which was also a recurring concern expressed in the interviews. Hence, it makes sense that in Finland, unlike in Canada, an outspoken rejection of religion and social concerns combine.[574] Yet, as we have seen, this is so only for one prototype. In the other prototypes, other kinds of social orientations are more dominant.

With the background of identifying potential problems with one-dimensional approaches for classifying non/religiosity, the potentially valuable contribution of this study is to point out at least three dimensions to be considered in non-religious worldview studies. There is no reason why we would not expect to find similar variation in later studies in the experiential/emotional, social/societal and religion/spiritual rejecting/approving dimensions.

Whether the particular combinations that were found in this study will be found in future studies is a matter of future research. Previous studies point to the existence of the dimensions I have identified. I use four previous studies to exemplify this. Schnell and Keenan found that contrary to Richard Dawkins's claim of atheists experiencing just as much meaning in their lives as religious people,[575] German atheists as a group experienced less meaning than religiously affiliated and non-religious (but not atheist) respondents. The matter becomes more interesting, however, when the

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[570] Cragun et al: 2012

[571] Baker and Smith: 2009

[572] Beyer (2015: 139-140) comes to a similar conclusion.

[573] Tomlins 2015: 126, 131-135

[574] Tomlins does not claim that his study on one student organisation would hold for Canadian affiliated non-religiosity in general, but his discussion on the potential implications is relevant.

[575] Dawkins 2006: 263

atheists are examined more closely. It turns out that atheists could be classified according to their commitments. Low-commitment atheists experienced least meaning in their lives, whereas the atheists with a broad range of commitments and atheists committed to self-actualisation experienced their lives nearly as meaningful as their non-atheist compatriots. The relationship between commitment and meaningfulness is important in the present study. The FQS wordings motivate the Content Altruist prototype to be described as *content,* whereas the interviews revealed that persons associated with this prototype were also the most activistic and held most general concerns. It seems, therefore, that their base of commitments was broad, and of the self-transcending type. That would explain a sense of meaningfulness and contentment in life. Likewise, the Experientially Spiritual prototype's social orientation is characterised by individualism, which may be close to Schnell and Keenan's self-actualising atheists. Even though Schnell and Keenan's study does not directly overlap with the findings of the present study, it hints at the existence of variation in the emotional/experiential dimension. Non-religious people hold a variety of emotional dispositions. This is also one of the features that distinguishes the prototypes of this study from one another.

Another study by Frank Pasquale on American secular group affiliates found variation similar to certain features of the present study. Just like in the present study, Pasquale's respondents were unanimous in their rejection of traditional monotheism. Ca 30%, however, were at least situationally open for the possibility that there is an impersonal force that connects all things. Dividing the respondents into four worldview types, Pasquale found variation in the strength and consistency in rejecting the following concepts: God (or transcendent entity), soul (personal essence), impersonal force (energy that courses through and connects all living things or all that exists) and ultimate purpose (or direction in human life or all of existence). A notable minority (ca 14%) was open to spirituality understood as a process/experience of higher awareness, consciousness, or as something transcendental.[576] Whereas most of Pasquale's respondents felt anger or other negative emotions towards religion and saw religion primarily as a harmful force, ca 21% were not angry and ca 13% felt that religion is too complex to generalise as primarily harmful.[577] Pasquale's findings indicate that the variation observed in the present study concerning both attitudes and emotions about religion and spirituality are not a speciality of Finnish non-religious affiliates.

It is more difficult to say whether there are similarities between Pasquale's respondents and the respondents of this study along the social and societal orientation (universal, individualistic and group-orientations). Willingness for societal engagement was important for ca 34% of Pasquale's respondents, and the majority of Pasquale's respondents valued societal virtues such as honesty, fair treatment of others, justice, compassion, responsibility for improving the world and helping others in need.[578] It seems that the 34% who valued societal engagement resemble the Content Altruists. On the other hand, Hunsberger and Altemeyer found that their atheist affiliates were both critical

[576] Pasquale 2010: 63-67

[577] Pasquale 2010: 69-70

[578] Pasquale 2010: 75-76

towards religion, and exhibited a strong tendency towards worldview ethnocentrism and dogmatism. This resembles closely the Communally Irreligious prototype, to a much lesser extent the Content Altruist prototype, and not at all the Experientially Spiritual prototype.

Both Schnell-Keenan's, Pasquale's and Hunsberger and Altemeyer's findings point to variation along particular dimensions of the non-religious worldviews. The strength of the Q-method is often stated to be its attention to the whole configuration rather than individual parts of a survey, or single isolated dimensions. The speciality in the present study, therefore, is not only to point to the variation across individual worldview dimensions, but also to how the dimensional loadings combine within the prototypes.

Another recent study by Christopher Cotter hints at the possibility of whole worldview configurations similar to the present study. Cotter's study of non-religious university students yielded five distinct types.[579] Out of these, two have similarities with the prototypes found in this study. The respondents of Cotter's humanistic type said they would put their faith in humanity, people or virtues. Like the Content Altruist prototype, the humanistic respondents were likely to put their humanitarian ideals in practice in their lives, which is similar to the activistic orientation of the Content Altruists. Furthermore, the respondents of the humanistic type expressed hostility towards religion, when religion was seen as standing in opposition with these ideals. This resembles the Content Altruists' concern-orientation, where religion may be rejected based on its perceived ill effects.

Another type with a clear overlap was Cotter's spiritual type. These respondents rooted their self-representation in experiential phenomena, expressed a positive attitude towards spirituality, often engaged in yoga, Tai Chi or healing practices, and were overall more positive towards religion than the other types. The openness towards religion did not, however, extend towards institutional religion and religious authority. Despite being anti-institutional and anti-hierarchical, the respondents of this type engaged in individualised syncretic or eclectic combinations of religious beliefs and practices. The similarities between the above mentioned types that Cotter has found, and the two emerging prototypes of this study are visible.

The situation with the Communally Irreligious prototype is more complex: The communal orientation is similar to Cotter's familial type, but in a reversed way: respondents of Cotter's familial type value family relationships over non-religion, whereas the Communally Irreligious seem to value non-religious association over family. Belonging is important for both. Furthermore, the religion-rejecting orientation of the Communally Irreligious seems to be closest to Cotter's naturalistic type, where respondents are likely to reject religion due to its falsity. It therefore looks like the Communally Irreligious prototype partially overlaps with two of Cotter's types, yet has distinct characteristics of its own.

[579] Cotter 2011 and 2015

It is a matter of future studies to find out to what extent the prototypes of this study are stable amongst the Finnish affiliates, and to what extent they are similar or different amongst unaffiliated non-religious. Finland aside, in the future similar studies need to pay attention to the national context. It is possible that the prevalent national ethos where the non-religious individuals find themselves will affect the likelihood of the emergence of certain prototypes.

In Finland, experiences of discrimination, if nowhere as pronounced as in the United States,[580] are nevertheless on the official agenda of many of the organisations, and the topic came up in many interviews. It would therefore not be surprising, if it turned out that the Finnish non-religious affiliates have a more activistic focus aiming at societal change, than in places where the ethos is more non-religion accommodating. In some places it may be the opposite. In certain Western countries non-religion is beginning to emerge as the majority position. In such countries, one might expect to find more of the type of social engagement of associating with like-minded individuals, without the consistent and outspoken rejection of religion and spirituality that was found in the Communally Irreligious prototype.

Another and more theoretical implication of this study is related to the dimensionality of worldview-assessment. It is important to accommodate statements that address the central beliefs of different worldview traditions, religious and non-religious alike. That is a good starting point, and since so far many research instruments have treated non-religion as a left-over category (if at all) without attention to its internal variation, it is important that in future studies the non-religious viewpoint is given due attention. This may be done by incorporating items that are positively relevant for a non-religious worldview. FQS has many such items. Combined with the possibility of sorting the religious items according to negative preferences, a nuanced understanding of differentiation from religion can emerge.

Equally if not more interesting is to see, how different sub-orientations within a worldview family share similar social and emotional orientations, and where they differ. It seems that the three main dimensions - the emotional/experiential, the social/societal and the non/religious and/or non/spiritual - should be considered side by side. This enables the possibility of arriving at interesting and real combinations along these dimensions. Such combinations, when empirically observed, may be used as a basis for theoretical typologies of non-religion. The present study suggests the possibility of three distinct instantiations on each dimension. Theoretically, a three-dimensional model of three instantiations per dimension hints at 27 possible non-religious worldview types.[581] It is a matter of empirical research to see, whether and to what extent such combinations exist in the real world.

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[580] Edgell, Gerteis and Hartmann 2006: 216-218

[581] A more moderate estimation based on this study would be 3 x 3 x 2 = 18. 27 is a liberal estimation based on three dimensions, each with three possible instantiations. It considers the possibility of heightened awareness of negative emotions as an option. The present study did not provide sufficient evidence for characterizing the CI prototype as such, but some features of the rang-ordering of items by this prototype hinted at a possibility to be confirmed by further studies.

Empirical results may also point to more dimensions, and more possible instantiations per dimension.

Moreover, it is not impossible that the societal and experiential orientations found amongst the non-religious individuals would meet similarities amongst at least some adherents of religious traditions.[582] Plurality and sympathetic understanding of the other is a real issue in the contemporary world. Results from studies such as the present one can provide empirical back-up for identifying a common ground shared by different worldviews. Despite differences regarding the substance of certain worldview beliefs, dimensional worldview studies can then, amongst other things, contribute to an informed understanding of the other on the worldview map. Going beyond the substantial content of beliefs may be helpful in the increasingly multicultural global village we inhabit. This idea was succinctly expressed by one of the respondents:

> ...I do not even know if my wife believes in God, I suppose not, I think to pose such a question is artificial. I do not think it matters much, I depart from how one is as a person, or how one behaves.[583]

[582] For examples, see Westerlund 2001 for religious and non-religious optimists; Hunsberger and Altemeyer 2006: 67-68; Altemeyer 2010: 8 and Nilsson 2013: 107 for religious and non-religious dogmatism or normativism (Nilsson observes that Tomkins' normative type is associated with both religious fundamentalism and opposition to religion; dogmatism is not the best word to describe such dynamics); Lepp 1962: 45-71 for neurotic atheism (Lepp recognises that religiosity can be just as neurotic); Galen and Kloet 2011: 2017 for higher levels of conscientiousness amongst strongly religious and strongly non-religious individuals, if both are compared with those who are less religious or religiously indifferent; and Zuckerman, Galen and Pasquale 2016: 196 for similarity in social views despite differences in metaphysical views between the nonreligious and religious progressives.

[583] FP1002

Appendixes

Appendix A: List of FQS statements

1. Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or cause.
2. Has frequent doubts about long-held religious convictions.
3. Feels closer to the ultimate in certain places (e.g., sanctuaries or pilgrimage sites).
4. Attributes a common core of insight and ethics to the world's religious traditions.
5. Feels guilty for not living up to religious ideals.
6. Spends much time reading or talking about his or her faith.
7. Participates in religious practices chiefly to satisfy others' wishes or expectations.
8. Longs for a deeper, more confident faith.
9. Grew up in a religious household.
10. Has experienced moments distinguished by an intensified sense of divine presence.
11. Feels most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of the natural world (e.g., a forest or the ocean).
12. Engages in religious rituals chiefly on major holidays.
13. Conceives of religious faith as a never-ending quest.
14. Is moved by the atmosphere of religious sanctuaries or shrines.
15. Considers the meaning of religious scriptures to be clear and unambiguous.
16. Being religious or spiritual is at the core of his or her identity.
17. Becomes more religious at times of crisis or need.
18. Considers religious scriptures to be of human authorship—inspired, perhaps, but not infallible.
19. Conceives of the transcendent in feminine terms (e.g., Gaia, the supreme goddess of the Earth).
20. Relies on religious authorities for understanding and direction.
21. Attends religious services to form or maintain friendships or business associations.
22. Affirms that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation.
23. Engages regularly in private spiritual practices (e.g., prayer,meditation, or yoga).
24. Takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters.
25. Expresses disdain or contempt for all religious institutions, ideas, and practices.
26. Regrets the personal loss of religious faith or a sense of God’s presence.
27. Expresses his or her faith primarily in charitable acts or social action.
28. Feels guided and sustained by certain familiar scriptural passages.
29. Actively works to relieve the suffering of others.
30. Considers regular attendance at religious services to be an essential expression of faith.
31. Thinks frequently and deeply about religious or spiritual questions.

32. Considers all religious scriptures to be outdated or misguided, hence largely worthless today.
33. Feels moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry.
34. Sees this world as a place of suffering and tears.
35. Feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal.
36. Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine.
37. Has experienced a sudden change in or intensification of religious understanding or commitment.
38. Feels confident of attaining eternal salvation.
39. Feels uncomfortable or fearful in turning to the divine.
40. Expresses his or her faith by following certain dietary practices.
41. Thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent.
42. Has a thorough knowledge of religious scriptures.
43. Is consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving little or no time for spiritual matters.
44. Senses a transcendent or universal luminous element within him- or herself.
45. Feels angry at or distant from God or the divine.
46. Turns to the divine with joy and thanksgiving.
47. Feels closest to those who share the same faith or religious outlook.
48. Expresses his or her faith by reaching out to those in need.
49. Seeks to intensify his or her experience of the divine or the ultimate.
50. Feels divine forgiveness for earlier thoughts and deeds.
51. Is dedicated to making the world a better place to live.
52. Lives his or her earthly life in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter.
53. Believes in a divine being with whom one can have personal relations.
54. Seeks to follow a well-defined set of moral principles.
55. Personally finds the idea of divinity empty of significance or meaning.
56. Embraces a spiritual outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values.
57. Seldom if ever doubts his or her religious views.
58. Has a religious outlook much like one or both parents.
59. Has a feeling of being at home in the universe.
60. Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires.
61. Feels threatened by evil forces at work in the world.
62. Prays chiefly for solace and personal protection.
63. Battles with inner impulses that are experienced as dark or even evil.
64. Centers his or her life on a religious or spiritual quest.
65. Furnishes his or her living space with objects intended to create a spiritual mood.
66. Deeply identifies with some holy figure, either human or divine.
67. Observes with great care prescribed religious practices and prohibitions.
68. Feels anxious about his or her fate in the next life.
69. Is burdened by a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy.
70. Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles.

71. Feels abandoned or rejected by God.
72. Moves from one religious group to another in search of a spiritual home.
73. Emphasizes ritual observance over religious beliefs or experience.
74. Feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being.
75. Feels a sense of peace even in the face of life difficulties.
76. Mainly associates with persons of the same religious tradition or outlook.
77. Shows evidence of being a caring and compassionate person.
78. Is often keenly aware of the presence of the divine.
79. Views all events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework.
80. Faces the prospect of death with courage and equanimity.
81. Has felt positively engaged by the symbols of other persons' religious traditions.
82. Is reluctant to reveal to associates a personal loss of faith.
83. Believes that one can be deeply moral and compassionate without being religious.
84. Has a vague and shifting religious outlook.
85. Finds belief in a benevolent god difficult in the face of evil.
86. Seeks to follow a spiritual path that, above all, is in harmony with the Earth.
87. Views religious content as not literally true, but mythic and metaphoric.
88. Views the transcendent as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never grasped.
89. Has experienced moments of profound illumination.
90. Affirms the doctrine of reincarnation, the cycle of birth and rebirth.
91. Takes delight in paradox and mystery.
92. Takes for granted that certain religious propositions are true.
93. Sees the full realisation of human potentialities to be the goal of human life.
94. Views symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of ultimate truth.
95. Affirms the possibility of human progress—e.g., the attainment of peace—on a worldwide scale.
96. Discerns no higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species.
97. Is an active, contributing member of some religious community.
98. Affirms and promotes a fundamental core of values.
99. Takes comfort in thinking that heretics and criminals will someday suffer in Hell.
100. Champions individual freedom of choice if it is thoughtfully responsible.
101. Considers hypocrisy—not practicing what one preaches—to be common in religious circles.

Appendix B: Example of an invitation letter

The version that I have translated into English is followed by the Finnish original. No invitation letters were sent in Swedish, as none of the organisations contacted have a prominent Swedish language profile.

Hyvät Tampereen vapaa-ajattelijat,

Lähestymme teitä koska toivomme, että voisitte auttaa meitä löytämään osallistujia tutkimushankkeeseemme liittyvään kyselyyn ja haastatteluun, esimerkiksi sähköpostilistojenne tai muiden kanavien kautta.

Åbo Akademissa on käynnistynyt tutkimus arvoista ja maailmankuvista Suomessa. Hanketta motivoi yhteiskunnassamme meneillään oleva maailmankuvien ja uskontojen muutos ja monimuotoistuminen. Toisaalta lisääntynyt monikulttuurisuus ja toisaalta pyrkimys oman identiteetin eheyden säilyttämiseen perinteiden ja kulttuurisen historian korostamisen kautta on lisännyt erilaisten liikkeiden ja järjestöjen kannatusta ja kirjoa. Ympäristökysymykset, oman uskonnollisen vakaumuksen perustan tukeminen ja kampanjat kirkon ja valtion erottamiseksi ovat saaneet ihmiset liikkeelle. *Näkökulmia maailmaan* -tutkimuksen puitteissa selvitämme millaiset arvot ja maailmankuvat ovat näiden liikkeiden ja yhteiskunnan muutosvirtausten taustalla. Hanke on nelivuotinen Suomen Akatemian rahoittama Akatemiahanke.

Arvoja ja niiden muuttumista on seurattu vuosikymmenten ajan. Tämänkaltaista tutkimusta ei kuitenkaan ole aiemmin yhdistetty systemaattiseen maailmankuvatyyppien kartoittamiseen tavalla, joka huomioi yksilöllisyyden ja kykenee tuomaan esiin laajan spektrin erilaisia käsityksiä maailmasta olivatpa ne sitten perinteisesti uskonnollisia, henkisiä, humanistisia, ateistisia tai jokin yhdistelmä näitä.

Kutsumme syyskuusta 2012 alkaen osallistujia kaksivaiheiseen haastatteluun. Ensimmäinen vaihe käsittää netissä tai postitse lähetettävälle lomakkeelle täytettävän kyselyn ja toinen vaihe noin puolentoista tunnin mittaisen kahdenkeskisen haastattelun. Haastateltavan identiteetti salataan tutkimuksessa.

Lähestymme teitä erityisesti löytääksemme henkilöitä, jotka korostavat elämässään uskonnotonta humanismia ja tapakulttuuria, vapaa-ajattelua tai ateismia ja ovat tavalla tai toisella mukana tätä edistävässä liikkeessä tai järjestössä, kuten Vapaa-ajattelijain liitto, Suomen humanistiliitto tai Suomen ateistiyhdistys. Kyselyyn voi osallistua netissä osoitteessa: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/vap1

Halutessanne voimme myös toimittaa teille paperilomakkeita palautuskuorineen. Lomakkeissa on myös ohjeet haastattelun toiseen vaiheeseen osallistumista varten. Lomakkeet voi tilata puhelimitse tai sähköpostilla ja annamme mielellämme lisätietoja tutkimuksesta:

Näkökulmia Maailmaan -hanke, Åbo Akademi Sähköposti: worlds@abo.
Puhelin: 050-4103222

Peter Nynäs

Professori, vastuullinen johtaja

Mika Lassander

Tutkijatohtori

Janne Kontala

Tutkija

Dear freethinkers of Tampere,

We approach you with the request that you could help us find participants for a survey and interview related to our research project, for instance through your mailing lists or through other venues.

Åbo Akademi has launched a study about values and worldviews in Finland. The project is motivated by an ongoing process, where worldviews and religions in our society undergo change and diversification. On the one hand cultural diversity and on the other hand attempt to preserve ones own identity intact by emphasising traditions and cultural history have increased the support for and diversity of different movements and organisations. Environmental issues, supporting the fundaments of one's own religious stance and campaigns for separating church and state have mobilised people. *Viewpoints to the World*-project attempts to investigate what kinds of values and worldviews lie behind these movements and currents that affect change in society. The four-year project is an Academy project financed by Academy of Finland.

Values and their transformation have been followed for decades. This sort of study, however, has not previously been connected to a systematic mapping of types of worldviews in a way, which considers individuality and can produce a wide spectrum of different views about world, whether they are traditionally religious, spiritual, humanistic, atheistic, or some combination of these.

Beginning from September 2012 we will invite participants to two-step interviews. The first step consists of filling in a survey through internet or sent by mail, and the second step is around 1,5-hour long face-to-face interview. Respondent identity is kept secret in the study.

We approach you particularly in order to find persons who in their lives emphasise non-religious humanism and customs, freethought or atheism, and who are in some way connected to a movement or organisation dedicated to such goals, such as the Union of Freethinkers, Finland's Humanist As-

sociation, or Finland's Union of Atheists. The survey is available through the following web-link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/vap1

If you so desire, we can also send you paper forms with return envelopes. The forms contain instructions about participation in the second step of the interview. You can order the forms by phone or email, and we are happy to give further information about the research:

Viewpoints to the World-project, Åbo Akademi. Email:: worlds@abo.fi
Phone: 050-4103222

Peter Nynäs

Professor, responsible project leader

Mika Lassander

Post-doctoral researcher

Janne Kontala

Researcher

Appendix C: FQS Factor and Z-score Arrays

The FQS statements are preceded and followed by the statement number used for identifying the statements in the computerised analysis. The three last variables range from -4 to 4, and indicate the factor scores assigned to each statement by prototype.

Column 1 stands for Prototype 1, named Content Altruist.
Column 2 stands for Prototype 2, named Experientially Spiritual.
Column 3 stands for Prototype 3, named Communally Irreligious.

No.	Statement	No.	1	2	3
1	Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious	1	-1	-3	-3
2	Has frequent doubts about long-held religious convictions.	2	-1	0	-1
3	Feels closer to the ultimate in certain places.	3	0	0	-1
4	Attributes a common core of insight and ethics to the world,	4	1	1	1
5	Feels guilty for not living up to religious ideals.	5	-1	-3	-2
6	Spends much time reading or talking about his or her faith.	6	1	0	0
7	Participates in religious practices chiefly to satisfy other	7	1	-2	0
8	Longs for a deeper, more confident faith.	8	-1	-1	-1
9	Grew up in a religious household.	9	1	0	0
10	Has experienced moments of an intensified sense of divine pr	10	-2	0	-2
11	Feels most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst of th	11	2	3	1
12	Engages in religious rituals chiefly on major holidays.	12	0	-1	0
13	Conceives of religious faith as a never-ending quest.	13	1	1	1
14	Is moved by the atmosphere of religious sanctuaries or shrin	14	0	1	0
15	Considers the meaning of religious scriptures to be clear an	15	0	-2	-2
16	Being religious or spiritual is at the core of his or her id	16	0	1	-1
17	Becomes more religious at times of crisis or need.	17	-1	0	-1
18	Considers religious scriptures of human authorship,ÄÎinspire	18	1	2	3
19	Conceives of the transcendent in feminine terms.	19	0	0	0
20	Relies on religious authorities for understanding and direct	20	-2	-3	-3
21	Attends religious services to form or maintain friendships o	21	0	-1	0
22	Affirms that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvat	22	-1	-3	-2
23	Engages regularly in private spiritual practices (e.g., pray	23	-1	2	-1
24	Takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters.	24	0	-2	2
25	Expresses disdain or contempt for all religious institutions	25	1	0	1
26	Regrets the personal loss of religious faith or a sense of G	26	-1	-3	-2
27	Expresses his or her faith primarily in charitable acts or s	27	2	0	0
28	Feels guided and sustained by certain familiar scriptural pa	28	0	1	-1

29 Actively works to relieve the suffering of others. 29 4 2 2
30 Considers attendance at religious services an essential expr 30 0 -1 0
31 Thinks frequently and deeply about religious or spiritual qu 31 2 3 1
32 Considers all religious scriptures to be outdated or misguid 32 2 0 2
33 Feels moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry. 33 2 4 3
34 Sees this world as a place of suffering and tears. 34 1 1 1
35 Feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal. 35 -2 -2 0
36 Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine. 36 -4 -4 -4
37 Has experienced a sudden change or intensification of religi 37 0 0 -1
38 Feels confident of attaining eternal salvation. 38 -3 -2 -3
39 Feels uncomfortable or fearful in turning to the divine. 39 -1 -1 0
40 Expresses his or her faith by following certain dietary prac 40 0 -3 -1
41 Thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent. 41 -2 -3 -1
42 Has a thorough knowledge of religious scriptures. 42 1 0 0
43 Is consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving little o 43 1 -1 1
44 Senses a transcendent or universal luminous element within h 44 -1 1 -1
45 Feels angry at or distant from God or the divine. 45 -1 -1 1
46 Turns to the divine with joy and thanksgiving. 46 -2 -2 -2
47 Feels closest to those who share the same faith or religious 47 1 1 2
48 Expresses his or her faith by reaching out to those in need. 48 2 1 1
49 Seeks to intensify his or her experience of the divine or th 49 -2 -1 -1
50 Feels divine forgiveness for earlier thoughts and deeds. 50 -4 -2 -2
51 Is dedicated to making the world a better place to live. 51 4 2 2
52 Lives his or her earthly life in conscious anticipation of a 52 -3 -1 -4
53 Believes in a divine being with whom one can have personal r 53 -3 -2 -3
54 Seeks to follow a well-defined set of moral principles. 54 3 2 3
55 Personally finds the idea of divinity empty of significance 55 3 0 4
56 Embraces a spiritual outlook that actively seeks to change s 56 3 3 2
57 Seldom if ever doubts his or her religious views. 57 1 -2 1
58 Has a religious outlook much like one or both parents. 58 0 0 2
59 Has a feeling of being at home in the universe. 59 3 4 2
60 Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and d 60 2 3 4
61 Feels threatened by evil forces at work in the world. 61 0 0 1
62 Prays chiefly for solace and protection. 62 -3 -2 -1
63 Battles with inner impulses that are experienced as dark or 63 0 0 0
64 Centers his or her life on a religious or spiritual quest 64 0 1 -2
65 Furnishes his or her living space with objects intended to c 65 1 0 0
66 Deeply identifies with some religious figure, either human o 66 -2 -1 -2
67 Observes with great care prescribed religious practices and 67 -2 -4 -2
68 Feels anxious about his or her fate in the next life. 68 -3 -4 -2

69	Is burdened by a deep sense of guilt and personal inadequacy	69	0	0	1
70	Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and ra	70	2	2	3
71	Feels abandoned or rejected by God.	71	-3	-3	-2
72	Moves from one religious group to another in search of a spi	72	-4	-2	-1
73	Emphasizes ritual observance over religious beliefs or exper	73	-2	-1	0
74	Feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being.	74	-4	-1	-4
75	Feels a sense of peace even in the face of life difficulties	75	2	2	1
76	Mainly associates with persons of the same religious traditi	76	-1	0	1
77	Shows evidence of being a caring and compassionate person.	77	4	2	3
78	Is often keenly aware of the presence of the divine.	78	-3	-2	-4
79	Views all events in this world within a religious or spiritu	79	-1	1	-3
80	Faces the prospect of death with courage and equanimity.	80	3	1	2
81	Has felt positively engaged by the symbols of other persons'	81	-1	1	0
82	Is reluctant to reveal to associates a personal loss of fait	82	-1	-1	0
83	Believes that one can be deeply moral and compassionate with	83	4	4	4
84	Has a vague and shifting religious outlook.	84	-2	-1	-1
85	Finds belief in a benevolent god difficult in the face of th	85	0	1	2
86	Seeks to follow a spiritual path that, above all, is in harm	86	1	2	1
87	Views religious content as mythic and metaphoric, hence not	87	2	3	3
88	Views the transcendent as a deep mystery that can be pointed	88	-2	1	0
89	Has experienced moments of profound illumination.	89	0	2	-1
90	Affirms the doctrine of reincarnation, the cycle of birth an	90	-4	-1	-3
91	Takes delight in paradox and mystery.	91	1	4	1
92	Takes for granted that certain religious propositions are tr	92	-3	-1	-4
93	Sees realisation of human potentialities to be the goal of l	93	1	3	2
94	Views symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of ultim	94	2	1	0
95	Affirms the possibility of human progress on a worldwide sca	95	3	2	2
96	Discerns no higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human	96	3	2	4
97	Is an active, contributing member of some religious communit	97	-1	-4	-3
98	Affirms and promotes a fundamental core of values.	98	4	3	3
99	Takes comfort in thinking that heretics and criminals will s	99	-2	-4	-3
100	Champions individual freedom of choice if it is thoughtfully	100	3	4	4
101	Considers hypocrisy to be common in religious circles.	101	2	3	3

Factor Scores with Corresponding Ranks

			Factors					
No.	Statement	No.	1		2		3	
1	Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some rel	1	-0.39	65	-1.27	94	-1.31	89

2 Has frequent doubts about long-held religious convicti 2 -0.64 72 -0.24 55 -0.52 67
3 Feels closer to the ultimate in certain places. 3 -0.16 56 0.06 44 -0.62 72
4 Attributes a common core of insight and ethics to the 4 0.41 32 0.41 34 0.48 35
5 Feels guilty for not living up to religious ideals. 5 -0.44 69 -1.14 89 -1.27 87
6 Spends much time reading or talking about his or her f 6 0.44 30 0.11 42 0.19 43
7 Participates in religious practices chiefly to satisfy 7 0.13 40 -0.81 79 0.15 44
8 Longs for a deeper, more confident faith. 8 -0.75 76 -0.69 71 -0.73 75
9 Grew up in a religious household. 9 0.29 34 -0.26 56 -0.30 59
10 Has experienced moments of an intensified sense of div 10 -0.94 83 -0.14 49 -0.77 77
11 Feels most attuned to spiritual realities in the midst 11 0.90 21 1.55 8 0.54 34
12 Engages in religious rituals chiefly on major holidays 12 -0.30 60 -0.62 66 0.07 48
13 Conceives of religious faith as a never-ending quest. 13 0.20 38 0.53 32 0.46 36
14 Is moved by the atmosphere of religious sanctuaries or 14 -0.02 46 0.21 39 -0.11 55
15 Considers the meaning of religious scriptures to be cl 15 -0.25 59 -0.80 77 -1.20 86
16 Being religious or spiritual is at the core of his or 16 -0.23 58 0.43 33 -0.64 73
17 Becomes more religious at times of crisis or need. 17 -0.45 70 -0.15 50 -0.45 65
18 Considers religious scriptures of human authorship,Äîi 18 0.41 31 1.25 15 1.43 10
19 Conceives of the transcendent in feminine terms. 19 -0.12 51 -0.20 54 -0.23 58
20 Relies on religious authorities for understanding and 20 -0.89 80 -1.20 91 -1.31 90
21 Attends religious services to form or maintain friends 21 -0.07 49 -0.56 65 0.01 51
22 Affirms that certain specific beliefs are crucial for 22 -0.72 75 -1.42 95 -1.27 88
23 Engages regularly in private spiritual practices (e.g. 23 -0.33 61 0.99 22 -0.58 69
24 Takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters. 24 -0.03 47 -0.86 82 0.76 24
25 Expresses disdain or contempt for all religious instit 25 0.11 41 -0.30 58 0.41 40
26 Regrets the personal loss of religious faith or a sens 26 -0.66 73 -1.21 93 -0.95 81
27 Expresses his or her faith primarily in charitable act 27 0.78 24 -0.19 53 0.03 50
28 Feels guided and sustained by certain familiar scriptu 28 -0.20 57 0.27 37 -0.46 66
29 Actively works to relieve the suffering of others. 29 1.93 3 1.17 17 0.83 22
30 Considers attendance at religious services an essentia 30 0.07 42 -0.65 68 -0.11 56
31 Thinks frequently and deeply about religious or spirit 31 0.65 25 1.37 12 0.54 33
32 Considers all religious scriptures to be outdated or m 32 1.12 20 -0.11 48 1.09 16
33 Feels moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poe 33 1.34 16 2.18 2 1.31 11
34 Sees this world as a place of suffering and tears. 34 0.14 39 0.17 40 0.39 41
35 Feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal. 35 -0.90 81 -1.07 88 0.21 42
36 Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine. 36 -1.78 101 -1.88 101 -1.67 99
37 Has experienced a sudden change or intensification of 37 0.04 43 0.02 45 -0.36 61
38 Feels confident of attaining eternal salvation. 38 -1.21 90 -0.95 85 -1.38 92
39 Feels uncomfortable or fearful in turning to the divin 39 -0.39 64 -0.66 70 -0.01 54
40 Expresses his or her faith by following certain dietar 40 -0.01 45 -1.14 90 -0.39 62
41 Thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing par 41 -0.86 79 -1.21 92 -0.58 68

42 Has a thorough knowledge of religious scriptures. 42 0.24 35 -0.26 57 0.01 52
43 Is consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving li 43 0.38 33 -0.63 67 0.42 38
44 Senses a transcendent or universal luminous element wi 44 -0.42 68 0.27 36 -0.61 70
45 Feels angry at or distant from God or the divine. 45 -0.33 62 -0.54 64 0.70 27
46 Turns to the divine with joy and thanksgiving. 46 -0.78 77 -1.06 87 -1.07 84
47 Feels closest to those who share the same faith or rel 47 0.53 28 0.13 41 1.18 14
48 Expresses his or her faith by reaching out to those in 48 1.34 14 0.63 30 0.56 32
49 Seeks to intensify his or her experience of the divine 49 -0.99 84 -0.38 62 -0.62 71
50 Feels divine forgiveness for earlier thoughts and deed 50 -1.57 97 -0.81 78 -0.95 80
51 Is dedicated to making the world a better place to liv 51 1.98 2 1.31 14 0.79 23
52 Lives his or her earthly life in conscious anticipatio 52 -1.25 92 -0.65 69 -1.70 100
53 Believes in a divine being with whom one can have pers 53 -1.45 94 -0.87 83 -1.51 95
54 Seeks to follow a well-defined set of moral principles 54 1.49 12 1.17 16 1.25 13
55 Personally finds the idea of divinity empty of signifi 55 1.52 11 -0.03 47 1.73 4
56 Embraces a spiritual outlook that actively seeks to ch 56 1.78 6 1.35 13 1.01 18
57 Seldom if ever doubts his or her religious views. 57 0.21 37 -0.84 80 0.60 30
58 Has a religious outlook much like one or both parents. 58 -0.15 55 -0.17 52 0.89 20
59 Has a feeling of being at home in the universe. 59 1.38 13 1.72 5 1.18 15
60 Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears 60 1.30 17 1.55 7 2.01 2
61 Feels threatened by evil forces at work in the world. 61 -0.06 48 -0.15 51 0.44 37
62 Prays chiefly for solace and protection. 62 -1.30 93 -1.06 86 -0.75 76
63 Battles with inner impulses that are experienced as da 63 -0.14 52 -0.31 59 0.10 46
64 Centers his or her life on a religious or spiritual qu 64 -0.14 54 0.57 31 -0.78 78
65 Furnishes his or her living space with objects intende 65 0.24 36 0.01 46 -0.01 53
66 Deeply identifies with some religious figure, either h 66 -1.20 88 -0.70 73 -1.03 82
67 Observes with great care prescribed religious practice 67 -0.86 78 -1.53 97 -1.06 83
68 Feels anxious about his or her fate in the next life. 68 -1.48 95 -1.72 99 -1.09 85
69 Is burdened by a deep sense of guilt and personal inad 69 -0.14 53 -0.31 60 0.42 39
70 Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific 70 1.20 18 1.01 20 1.53 7
71 Feels abandoned or rejected by God. 71 -1.23 91 -1.51 96 -0.88 79
72 Moves from one religious group to another in search of 72 -1.61 98 -0.86 81 -0.41 64
73 Emphasizes ritual observance over religious beliefs or 73 -1.02 85 -0.70 72 -0.13 57
74 Feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual b 74 -1.67 99 -0.75 75 -1.62 98
75 Feels a sense of peace even in the face of life diffic 75 1.34 15 0.89 24 0.62 28
76 Mainly associates with persons of the same religious t 76 -0.42 67 0.10 43 0.72 26
77 Shows evidence of being a caring and compassionate per 77 1.80 5 1.12 19 1.30 12
78 Is often keenly aware of the presence of the divine. 78 -1.50 96 -0.92 84 -1.72 101
79 Views all events in this world within a religious or s 79 -0.35 63 0.31 35 -1.33 91
80 Faces the prospect of death with courage and equanimit 80 1.61 8 0.85 26 0.93 19
81 Has felt positively engaged by the symbols of other pe 81 -0.40 66 0.65 29 0.08 47

82	Is reluctant to reveal to associates a personal loss o	82	-0.70	74	-0.71	74	-0.35	60
83	Believes that one can be deeply moral and compassionat	83	2.07	1	2.28	1	2.44	1
84	Has a vague and shifting religious outlook.	84	-1.17	86	-0.36	61	-0.71	74
85	Finds belief in a benevolent god difficult in the face	85	-0.08	50	0.24	38	0.74	25
86	Seeks to follow a spiritual path that, above all, is i	86	0.59	27	1.17	18	0.57	31
87	Views religious content as mythic and metaphoric, henc	87	0.86	22	1.53	9	1.55	6
88	Views the transcendent as a deep mystery that can be p	88	-0.93	82	0.84	27	0.06	49
89	Has experienced moments of profound illumination.	89	0.03	44	0.87	25	-0.41	63
90	Affirms the doctrine of reincarnation, the cycle of bi	90	-1.74	100	-0.48	63	-1.43	93
91	Takes delight in paradox and mystery.	91	0.46	29	1.80	4	0.61	29
92	Takes for granted that certain religious propositions	92	-1.21	89	-0.76	76	-1.58	97
93	Sees realization of human potentialities to be the goa	93	0.64	26	1.65	6	0.87	21
94	Views symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of	94	0.83	23	0.73	28	0.15	45
95	Affirms the possibility of human progress on a worldwi	95	1.61	9	0.91	23	1.06	17
96	Discerns no higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the	96	1.63	7	1.00	21	1.95	3
97	Is an active, contributing member of some religious co	97	-0.49	71	-1.57	98	-1.57	96
98	Affirms and promotes a fundamental core of values.	98	1.93	4	1.47	11	1.49	8
99	Takes comfort in thinking that heretics and criminals	99	-1.19	87	-1.79	100	-1.50	94
100	Champions individual freedom of choice if it is though	100	1.60	10	1.83	3	1.72	5
101	Considers hypocrisy to be common in religious circles.	101	1.18	19	1.49	10	1.45	9

Appendix D: Sorting instructions

The following instructions are provided by David Wulff.

Instructions for Carrying Out the Faith Q-Sort

Thank you for your interest in completing the Faith Q-Sort. "Faith" should be understood in a broad sense, encompassing any of a variety of personal perspectives on the world, other people, and oneself. If it will be helpful, you may substitute "personal outlook" for it. The words "religious" and "spiritual" should also be understood broadly, more or less as you might ordinarily use them. A "religious outlook" or "view" should be understood, in addition to the usual meanings, as potentially encompassing atheist, agnostic, indifferent, or even antagonistic views. "Transcendent" is intended to refer to something that is more than mundane, something suggesting a felt higher significance, meaning, or power.

1. Start by laying out the nine category cards in numerical order, with -4 ("LEAST DESCRIPTIVE") to the extreme left and +4 ("MOST DESCRIPTIVE") to the extreme right. They should be placed an arm's length away on the table before you.

2. Then sort the 101 statements into three piles: (1) statements that more or less describe you; (2) statements that are neutral, seem inapplicable to you, or are simply puzzling to you; and (3) statements that, in varying degrees, do *not* describe you.

3. Starting with pile 1, identify the *five* statements that are *most descriptive* of you. Lay out these statements in a column below the Category +4 card. The order of the statements within a category is unimportant. Then identify the *eight* statements that are next most characteristic of you, drawing on pile 2 as necessary; these should be laid out below the Category +3 card. If you have cards left over from the initial pile of cards describing you, continue by placing them in Category +2. Otherwise proceed with step 4.

4. Take up the third pile created in step 2 and follow the same procedure as in step 3, but this time placing the five statements that are *least descriptive* of you in column -4, then the next eight in column -3, and so on.

5. Finally, take the statements that you have left and fill in the remaining spaces, so that each column contains the number of statements specified on its category card. When you have finished sorting all the cards, review the array of statements laid out before you and adjust it until you are satisfied that it represents your views and commitments reasonably well, given the constraints of the method.

6. Record the results of your sorting by writing the statement numbers in the corresponding columns on the record sheet. Again, note that the order of the statements in each column has no particular significance. Then please provide the additional information requested about yourself.

7. Carefully return all of the Q-sort cards to the box and then place the nine category cards on top for the next user.[584]

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[584] Wulff 2009a

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